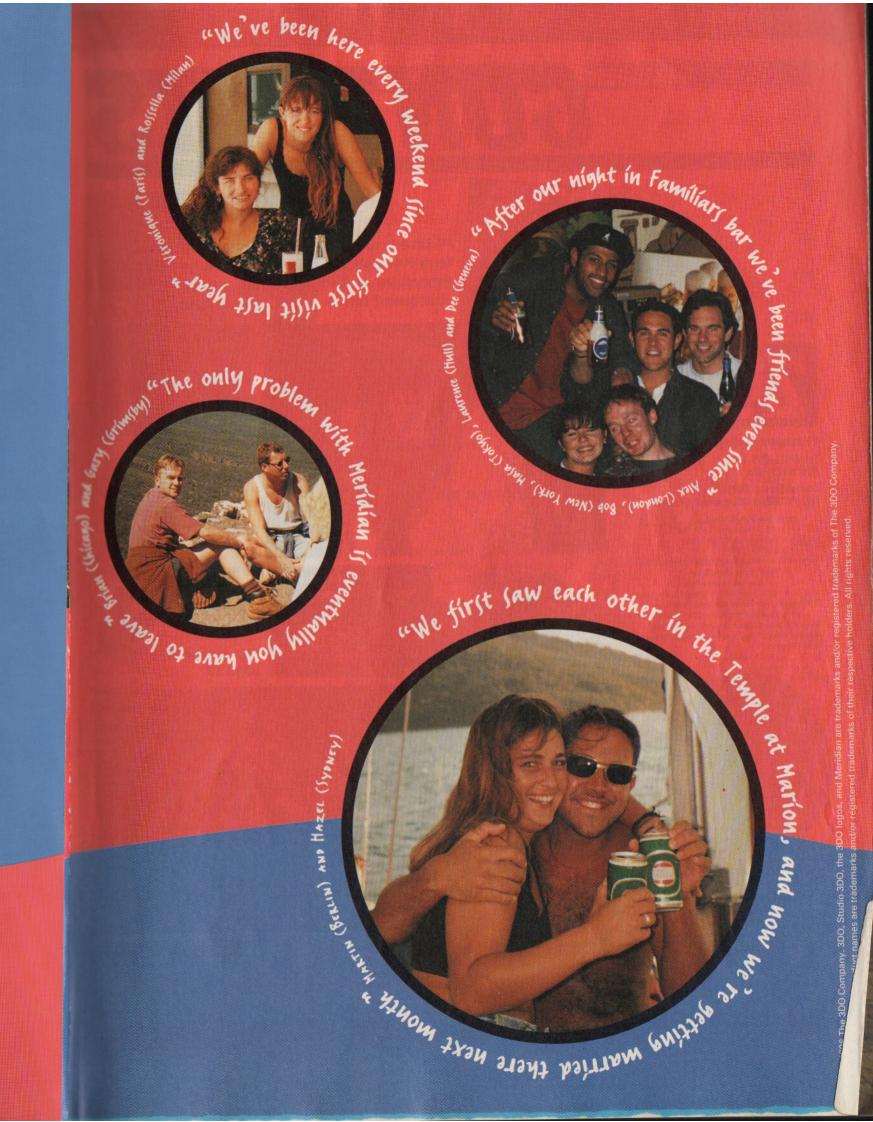




Specialists to

"Not since the discovery of the Americas has there been so much excitement about a new world"

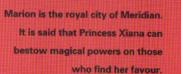
Steve Jackson, columnist, Daily Telegraph



THE FORESTS OF MERIDIAN

Venture into the Castle of Victoria where, legend has it, you can encounter ghosts (some more Visit Ketanaa the hermit, who can give you useful information about the forest if he's in the mood









BEWARE. Farol Forest is home to Orcs and spiders. Tread carefully



THE OLD TOWN OF MARION

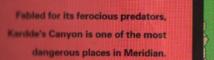
Visit the well near her temple, famed for its healing powers

in Meridian 59 to go shopping for weapons. Unfortunately for all its beauty, Marion is not a nice

THE TOWN OF TOS

when visit The Arena, on the East side. Here there are fights staged for your entertainment.







Paddock, Frisconar and Fehr'loi Qan await your arrival in the town of Tos



HARDDE'S CANYON & KARDONNE

Situated to the west of the town of Tos lies Kardonne with a wide range of places at the top of the beautiful Badlands Mountain.

ensure you visit the underground lake

To book your trip to Meridian 59 contact studio 3DO tours on http://www.ado.com or visit your nearest 3DO dealer. Packages from £39.99.

BLUEPRINTS Tomb Raider Can Core's new 3D action adventure game really be championed as the closest thing to Harde 64 on the PC? We went to Core HQ in

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PC Zone is the UK's best-selling PC games magazine: ABC 43,149







PC Zone in association with Perfect Entertainment. Terry Pratchett and Nigel Planer bring you the first ever review of Discworld 2. Is it even better than the first game? Turn to page 82 and find out.









page 66







really be championed as the closest thing to Mario 64 on the PC? We went to Core HQ in berby to find out.



Archymedian Dynasty

Wing Commander under water may not be the best way to describe it, but BlueByte's new shoot 'em up certainly doesn't look substandard!

Robotron X

The old arcade classic gets the 3D treatment from Williams, but will it work in the '90s?

Guts 'N' Garters

Newcomers Magic Canvas bring all the expertise they've gained from working with the Inland Revenue and touchscreen technology to the games arena. This one's gonna be wild.

Fifa Soccer '97

Can EA Sports finally produce a football sim that kicks Gremlin's Actua into touch? We take a look at an early version of the 'all-new' footie sim hot from EA Canada.

Fragile Allegiance

Will Gremlin's new space strategy/combat sim and the successor to the old Amiga classic K240 be any different to the zillion other C&C clones due out over the next six months?

Comanche 3

NovaLogic prove the adage that all good things come in threes, whilst we sit back and gawp at the landscape and fantastically detailed helicopters.

Interactive Magic bring their own inimitable brand of depth and accuracy to the world of the tank sim.

Imperium Gallatica

Ouite how David MaCandless hopes to accurately report on Hungarian developers Digital Reality considering the amount of time he spent gawping at all the "mondo-schwing" babes is a mystery - until you read his copy.

Less a battle of the bowels and more a next gen Warcraft clone from ssi that looks rather tasty thank you very much.

REVIEWS

Discworld 2

The original Discworld set new standards in adventure gaming - and was bloody difficult. Find out if Perfect Entertainment have got the balance right in our EXCLUSIVE review of one of the biggest sequels of the year.

John Madden '97

EA Sports glam it up with the graphically lush American football sim that everyone's been waiting for.

Scorched Planet

It's being hailed as a Defender for the '90s, but does it have all the intensity of the '80s classic?

Network Q RAC Rally

Forget Sega Rally, this is quite simply the best off-road racer ever developed. FACT!

Road Rash 95

56

63

73

Everyone's favourite biker basher finally makes it onto the PC courtesy of Windows 95.



Flight Simulator 95

Typical. Microsoft release the latest version of their best-selling Flight Sim series and we get the WORLD EXCLUSIVE review.



Formula 1 Manager

110 Many have tried to get it right, and it looks like Europress have come the closest yet.

Privateer 2: The Darkening 113

EA's star-studded spectacular finally makes it onto the shelves. Has it been worth the wait?

Bullfrog's kitsch C&C clone proves to be another classic. How do they do it?

FEATURE

Are You A Computer Geek?

re you a nerd, happy just following the herd or a radical cyber-dude? Complete our restionnaire and find out before it's too late!

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What's new, who's doing it and when.

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On second thoughts...

123 Pick 'n' Mix

The rest of the month's releases reviewed & rated. 126 **Budget Reviews**

This month's best budget releases...

Hardware Reviews

Microsoft's new Sidewinder Pro Gamepad & Core's Component P166 PC reviewed.

137 **PC Zone On-Line**

We take a look at the best on-line games available and tell you how to play them.

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Trouble Shooter

Hints 'n' cheats & a guide to The Gene Machine.

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166 **Word Processor**

Is Z great or what?

169 **Culky's Column** Culky gets stars in his eyes.

170 **Mr Cursor**

He's afraid of... Money.



COVER DISKS

CONE

Help!

playing up? The PC's being a total bast? Don't worry – phone our helpline and sort yourself out pronto!:

HD DISK HELP

Phone Matthew on 01274 736990 Any week day between 9am and 4pm

CD-ROM HELP

Phone ABT on 01708 250250

Any week day between 11am and 6pm (Please DO NOT phone the PC Zone office as your calls will NOT be answered)

If you are calling either help line, then please take note of the following points:

- If possible have your PC operating and near to the phone when you call.
- If this is not possible, note down as much relevant information as possible ie system type, sound card, RAM etc, plus the nature of the fault.
- Make sure you have a pen and paper to hand when you call to jot down the relevant info.

No CD?

If you are unable to get your grubby paws on the CD issue, then fear not! Simply fill out this slip, enclose your HD from the cover plus a cheque for a whole £1 and send it to:

> CD Exchange (43), PC Zone, Dennis Publishing, 19 Bolsover St, London W1P 7HJ

Your details (please print clearly)

Address:

. . .

Please make cheques payable to: **DENNIS PUBLISHING Ltd.**

CDs from previous issues are also available.

Of.

HD DISKS

To run the software on this month's floppies, make your disk drive current by typing 'A:' and then type either 'Empire' or 'WADAuth', depending on what disk you wish to run.

World Empire IV (Shareware)

A Risc-like game that supports up to four players over a network. This is a 30-day trial and runs under Windows 95/3.1.

Min. Spec: 486 DX2/66 8MbRAM SoundBlaster & compatibles Windows 95/3.1







WAD Author for Doom, Doom2, Heretic & Hexen for Windows 95/3.1/NT

A complex WAD editor that allows you to create your own levels for all of the above iD games. Access the README.TXT file on the floppy for more information and instructions on how to use this powerful utility.

NOTE: To run this editor you'll need Windows 95/3.1 and you must have either *Doom*, *Doom2*, *Hexen* or *Heretic* already installed on your hard drive.

CD ROM

To access the software on this month's CD, change to your CD drive (i.e. type 'D:') and then type 'PCZONE'. This will automatically launch the menu system and then it's simply a question of pointing and clicking your way through the various options to install the demos onto your hard drive.

Discworld 2 (Perfect Entertainment/Psygnosis)

Lose yourself in this interactive tale set on Terry Pratchett's funky, far-out Discworld, the immense biscuit-shaped planet that's balanced on the back of a turtle and four elephants...or is it *four* turtles and *one* elephant? Or two elephants, a cow, and a bloody big snake? I'm not sure.

Anyhow, in this fully playable demo of Perfect Entertainment's jaw-dropping Discworld 2 you'll find yourself taking control of Rincewind, the wizardy hero (voiced by Eric Idle, erstwhile king of all things 'Zany'). Your aim, in this tantalising fun-size chunk of the action, is to somehow get yourself out of the city of Ankh-Morpork. Since the only people who are allowed out are the dead ones, this ain't going to be easy. Pull your brains out and wrap 'em round that one, smartarse. Some of the jokes are funny enough to set you pissing your knickers, so make sure you put a bucket down before you start. Once it's full to the brim, tape it up and send it to Gary Bushell, c/o The Sun 'newspaper', Wapping.

Controls: Discworld 2 uses a Windows 95-style control method. A single click with the left mouse button will make Rincewind walk to your desired location; double-click on an object to use it. If you want to talk to someone, just double-click on them. Clicking the right mouse button will cause Rincewind to utter a pithy comment about whatever he's looking at.







Rincewind can carry two objects at a time in his pockets; single-click on him to see what he's got. The walking luggage that follows you around, however, can carry more or less anything (click on that to see what's inside, or to add a new object).

If you want to save your position, or tinker about with the set-up, just

If you want to save your position, or tinker about with the set-up, just hit F1 during the game.

Min. Specs: DX2/66 8Mb RAM CD-ROM SVGA SoundBlaster & compatibles

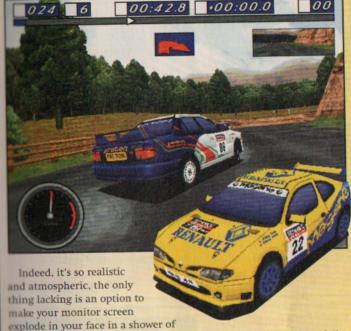
PSSST...! HERE'S A HINT... If you accidentally ask someone the same question twice, rather than sit through their responses all over again, just hit the 'Escape' key to go back to the conversation menu.

Network Q RAC Rally Championship

Magnetic Fields/Europress Software)

wer wondered what it's like to drive like a complete bloody maniac at 1,000 miles an hour through a series of winding countryside courses, parently constructed by someone with a PhD in Twisty Road Design? You haven't? Well, pull yourself together, man – it's Rally Driving time. The pair of butch driving gloves over your pasty, sweaty, girl's hands, and haul your unpleasant, flabby arse into the driving seat for this wheel-tastic demo of the upcoming Europress 'driving without due are and attention' sim.

We think you'll agree that the smooth, speedy graphics, the authentic sound effects, and the convincing handling add up to something very special indeed. We wuv it woads.



glass whenever there's a nasty crash. Which is a feature that hopefully won't be making it into the final release – although loads of other, less dangerous, yet equally exciting ones will*: more courses, cars and weather conditions.

Anyway, fire up the demo and you're away. There's only one course (and one car) but it's a huge one. Pay attention to the loud-mouthed

navigator 'cos he knows which bends are coming up next. When the race starts, your gears are in neutral; make sure you change up as soon as those lights turn green. If you think it's a bit of a pushover, try changing the road width or the intelligence of the opposing drivers (from the main options screen).

Keyboard Controls:

- Left
- X Right
 Accelerate
- Change Gear Up
- Change Gear Down

We recommend the use of a gamepad... or better yet, one of those steering wheel things just don't try using the mouse.

Min. Spec: 486DX266 8Mb RAM SoundBlaster 58Mb HDD space free

YOU GOTTA ROLL WITH IT: For added larfs, why not see how many times you can roll the car over... and still finish first. Swerving the wrong way at top speed on a sharp bend is a surefire way of sending the car arse over tit. Just don't try it in a real car, okay? Unless you've got Gary Bushell in the passenger seat, that is.







My ninth is Enigma but not in a Mystery

My tenth is an Ancestor but not one from History

My eleventh is You but you are not Involved

My all is a mystery yet to be solved.

My second in Jewels but not in a Ring

DO NOT

TURN

THE PAGE

UNTIL YOU HAVE SOLVED

THIS RIDDLE

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Syndicate Wars (Bullfrog/Electronic Arts)

We drooled an oily bucketful of saliva over this in the last issue. Now here's your chance to climb inside that bucket. Immerse yourself completely in the seedy, violent world of Syndicate Wars, the game with a heart of black and cast of thousands of soon-to-be corpses. Watch the body count escalate to apocalyptic proportions in the comfort of your own home, as you take command of a team of homicidal cyborg henchmen rampaging through a sprawling, futuristic cityscape. There's one mission in this playable demo - be sure to read the briefing at the start, 'cos it's a bit tricky. If, during the game, you're not sure where you're going, check out the map in the bottom left corner of the screen - the red radar rings are emanating from your current target. Oh veah - and if you double-click the ol' mouse, your agents will run to their destination.

Note: You can control the game entirely with the mouse if you wish, although the following keyboard commands are pretty bloody handy:

Group agents together

Toggle agent movement control from mouse to cursor keys

Del PgDn Ins Rotate city right Pg Up Ctrl Fire selected weapon

Left button move (double-click to run)

Right button fire

Click on a weapons icon to activate it, or to select another.

Min. Spec: 486 DX2/66 8Mb RAM SoundBlaster & compatibles









Left mou

Alt + Me

End Esc

40

SPOD CORNER: To run Syndicate Wars in high-res mode (which we heartily recommend if you have a fast Pentium), you'll need a VESA-compatible video ard, with the relevant drivers installed (Univbe 5.1 is a particularly good shareware one, if you haven't already got it). The game defaults to low-res on start-up hange the configuration screens or hit F8 to switch from high to low.

Road Rash '95 (Electronic Arts)

Wahey! It's clobberin' time! And it's clobberin' time on motorbikes, at that. Road Rash 95 is an utterly 'ooh la la' arcade game that's overflowing with thrills, spills, chills and sudden unexpected blows to the head.





You're taking part in a no-holds barred illegal road race across America. To win you'll have to drive very fast and punch your opponents very hard - both at the same time. If you're lucky, you'll manage to grab a weapon to help you smack the bastards. If you're unlucky, you'll find yourself colliding head-on with a car at 200mph. Mow down pedestrians, attack the police, drive like a melonfarmer. Who could ask for anything more? This cut-down demo version gives you one track - The Peninsula - but the full version features all the others (and it's miles harder).

Cursor key up Cursor left/right (All the keys are re-definable)

Min. Spec: 486 DX2/66 8Mb RAM SoundBlaster & compatibles Windows 95

A QUICK 'HINT' TO HELP YOU PLAY... To really osych yourself up, imagine that all the other racers are clones of Gary Bushell. 's amazing how satisfying it feels when you bash their stupid, fat heads in.

Time Commando

(Adeline/Electronic Arts) In which you, for reasons which don't entirely warrant repetition, find yourself spiralling helplessly through time, hopping from era to era in an instant, constantly

getting into scraps. Yes, folks, it's a beat-'emup; a three-dimensional

platform game-cum-beat-'em-up in fact. Sceptical? Give it a quick go and you won't be. The graphics are gorgeous, the gameplay simple, but addictive. This one-level demo sends you back to the Jurassic period, where you'll face sabre-toothed tigers and hairy-palmed, Bushellbrained cavemen in a fight to the death. Keep moving to keep up with the camera position. And here's a tip - pick up any rocks you see lying around. They're ideal for hurling at people's heads...

Min. Spec: DX2/66 8Mb RAM SoundBlaster & compati

Search/Look

LEFT CTRL + LEFT CTRL + RIGHT CTRL + DOWN SPACEBAR

Move forward (if an enemy is near, Stanley will jump forward slightly). Move clockwise Move counter-clockwise Right-handed punch /weapon Kick /Weapon

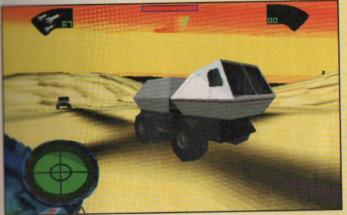


FRANCE IS PLOP: Time Commando is great. In fact, its sole drawback is that it was written in France - the smelly, horrible place where people who don't wash, shave, wipe their bottoms properly, or make ntertaining films live. Stinkypooland, that's what we call it.

Scorched Planet Criterion/Virgin Interactive Entertainment

Coming at ya in all three dimensions from Criterion Software is serched Planet, the game that's sort of like a modern day take on Infender, If you think the 3D engine's pretty bloody smart, then you shouldn't be surprised - Criterion started out as a 3D software company and this represents its first foray into the PC gaming arena. Bodes well for the future, then wethinks.

The action's somewhat fast and furious, but you will need to know what you're doing before you get stuck in. It's a tad too complex to describe right here...which is why it's just as well Criterion saw fit to include a helpful manual, complete with pictures and everything, along with this demo. It'll install itself into the same directory as the same files - just open it with Microsoft Word (or the special viewing program that's also provided) and read away. Anyway, we're reprinting all the keyboard commands here as a handy reference guide.



	THE PERSON NAMED IN COLUMN TWO		The second second
		Alt + up & down arrows	move aircraft
ontrol			from side to side
use button (RMB)	accelerate	P	pause game
	(double-click for	S	shadows on/off
	higher tank speed)	T	select homing
se button (LMB)	fire		missile target
use movement	move tank turret	L	lock onto
	up and down		selected target
use movement	move aircraft	M	toggle homing
	from side to side		missile camera
novement	vehicle direction		angles
		X	sodomise Gary
d Control			Bushell
	vehicle door	F1	cockpit view
	open/close	F2	first-person view
	calling humans	F3	top-down view
	onboard	F4	fixed camera
	vehicle morph		orientation
	exit to Options	F5	fixed chase view
	screen	F6	fixed rear view
	radar range	F7	left side view
	lower/higher	F8	right side view
	accelerate	F9	free chase view

F8
F9
Radar signatures
white dot
yellow dot
blue dot
red dot
purple dot

Specs: 486DX66 min 8Mb RAM VGA ndBlaster & compatibles Joystick



higher tank speed)

vehicle direction

map view on/off

cycle through

inventory items

inventory item

rotates vehicle

180 degrees

tank turret up



human

power-up

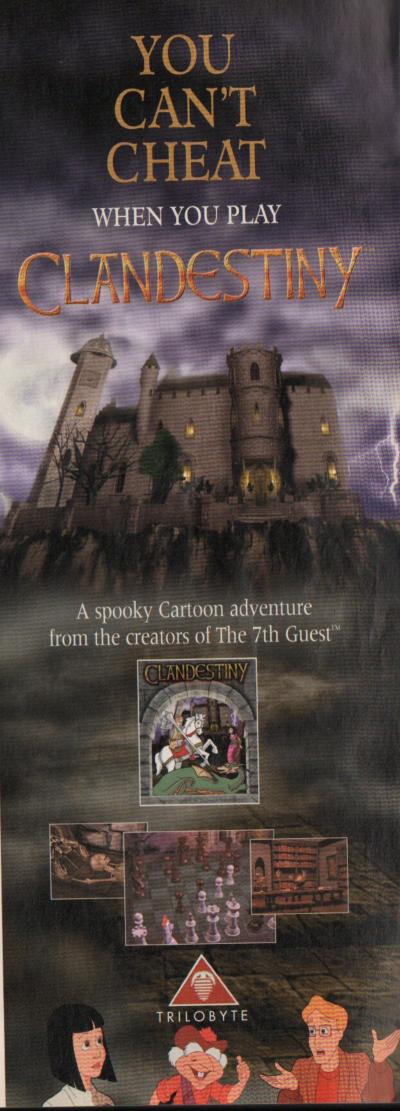
(flashing =

fuel/shield)

flying Voraxian

ground Voraxian

Voraxian Factory Ship



Cool Quake Stuff!

Just when you thought it was safe... to think we would stop talking about *Quake*, here we are again with a bundle, nay a cornucopia, of new add-ons, maps, extras, and levels for the game that begins with 'Q'.

Explore your PC Zone CD this month and find a directory called 'QSTUFF'. Within, you will find several directories, each one packed to touching cloth point with new code constructed by the sad denizens of the Net. Most of this stuff was sourced from http://www.stomped.com/ - the best Quake Web site around. There are a few things to note, however, before you canter off into the wonderpark.



- 1. Read the documentation for each path thoroughly before implementing.
- 2. The majority of these patches are in $\it quake\ c$ format, either compiled (as a PROGS.DAT file), or uncompiled (as a list of .QC files).
- 3. If the zip file contains a PROGS.DAT file, simply create a new folder in your registered QUAKE directory. Say, for example, 'GIBS'. Copy the PROGS.DAT file into the GIBS directory and then run QUAKE with this command line:

quake -game gibs

That's it. Your add-on is now in action. It has not changed or altered your *Quake* files, so don't be scared.



- 4. If the add-on is uncompiled, then you will have to compile it yourself. This is annoying and requires you to use the QCCDOS or the QCCWIN32 programs included in the QSTUFF directory. These are Quake C compilers and will produce a PROGS.DAT file. If you don't feel up to it, don't do it. We will endeavour to put a bunch of pre-compiled patches on the disk next month.
- 5. The new levels are easy to sort out. Just enter the QUAKE\D1 directory and create a folder called MAPS. Unzip the level files in there, run QUAKE, and at the console, type:

MAP XXXXX

where XXXXX is the exact name of the MAP file.

If you get stuck, access the README.TXT file that accompanies each file.



BOTS

Bots are the latest fad in *Quake* add-ons. Basically, they're automated, artificially intelligent objects — either monsters, other players, or 'floaty things'. Depending on the patch, they will act as helpers (to aid you in single-player) or as teammates or opponents (in deathmatch). If you want to try a deathmatch bot out, start a multi-player game in *Quake**, selecting 'Direct Connection'. Some patches of merit are:

BGADMBOT stands for the BG Automatic DM Opponent. You can have up to four of these nasty little gits patrolling a level. They'll pick up weapons, ammo, health and armour. Choose different weapons, hunt you down, fight amongst themselves, and telefrag you if given the chance.

BGBOT is similar to the above, only these boys are tuned for teamplay deathmatch and will fight like slaves on your side, drawing enemy fire and sacrificing themselves to rockets in order to protect you.



CUJO is your own personal rottweller which will follow you around the level, biting your opponents, both monsters and other players. He also has a patented CollarLamp™, useful in dark bits.

MYBOT is a helper droid in the shape of an enforcer which slowly trugs round the level at your heels, killing anything which fires at you, and searching for health when it feels poorly. It also can get angry.

WISP is shaped like a lavaball and flies around you, rather like the R-Type 'orb', firing and drawing the fire of monsters. If you find yourself in a tricky situation, you can also ride it to the rafters.



MULTI-PLAYER

There are some cool deathmatch add-ons out there, programmed primarily to 'correct' and enhance the spoogeworthy rush of *Quake* deathmatch.

CAMPKILL is an anti-lurker device which monitors 'camping' players for lack of movement. A stationary sniper is given three warnings and is then unceremoniously gibbed for being a talentless pig. This patch also contains a next level randomiser.

DMMDE321 adds a selection of monster-packed deathmatch modes, combining respawning monsters and infinite ammo for extra laughs.



JFIEND turns Pentagram Of Protection wearers into Fiends with all the nasty jumping ability and claws which come with the job. Hilarious.

ENHANCED TEAMPLAY makes chum-based firefights a joy. Here you can tailor your clan matches, so that players are killed or lose a frag for accidentally murdering teammates. Players can also drop weapons, and are prevented from swapping teams if loosing.

KEYMIX15 is far away one of the best Quake C add-ons. It will change your deathmatch life as it adds over 16 new weapons and effects, including Throwing Axe, Bubbles, Shotgun Shells, Proximity Mines, Drunk Missile, MultiSkin, Fish Rockets, and Nukem-style pipebombs.



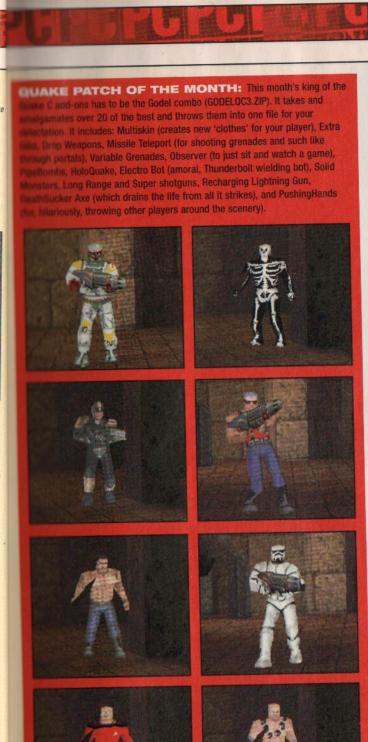
MISCELLANEOUS

A few uncategorisable add-ons can be found here. Blood gives you, well, extra blood in the game while Decoy creates a self-destructing, remote-operated Holo Quake. Expbk is for exploding backpacks, and Grap105 adds the indispensable grappling hook.



WEAPONS

The weapons directory is full, as you may guess, of extra hardware for your hardy marine. Among them is the classic Axe Of Command (swipe a monster and he becomes your slave), Blaster (to gain the Enforcer's laser gun), Homing Missile, Tractor Beam, Nail Bomb, Vampire Bolt, MediaBolt, and Ricochet Nails. Nice.











Diablo (Blizzard/Zablac)

Diablo is an absurdly beautiful isometric roleplaying game from Blizzard (the Warcraft people).

As befits a Windows 95 native product, it's all controlled with the mouse, in a manner so selfexplanatory that only a total arsewit couldn't work it out for themselves. Anyway, in case Gary Bushell is reading, here's what you do. Use the left mouse button for walking around. Highlight a character with the mouse, then click to talk to them (or hack them to death, depending on your situation). If you're a bit confused, head up to the top right of the playing area and you'll discover the entrance to a dungeon. Nip inside that and it's argy-bargy time. You'll soon get the hang of things. The full version is all set to feature a rather nifty on-line multi-player mode, in which you find yourself a-questing alongside other players from all over the world (i.e. long-haired, Metallica-worshipping students from Delaware).

Controls: Use the mouse, turkeyneck.

Min. Specs: 486 DX266 min 8Mb RAM (Pentium recommended) SVGA Windows 95 SoundBlaster & compatibles. Modem & Internet account req. for multi-player mode



DIRECT BACON, DIRECT X: Like many of this month's offerings, Diablo requires the latest version of DirectX to run. Don't panic if you don't know what the hell that means - it's a new set of spangly display gizmos for Windows 95, and it's included on our CD. If you have any problems with your display following the installation of Direct X, simply restart Windows in 'safe mode' (by hitting F8 as soon as the 'Starting Windows 95...' message appears, then choosing the relevant option from the list), open the Control Panel, and change your display driver back to the original setting. We're not trying to scare you, we're just being practical. Okay?

Cyber Gladiators (Sierra)

Sierra has been a bit quiet of late, but Cyber Gladiators looks set to change all that. Taking its lead from Tekken and Virtua Fighter, it's a blindingly gorgeous-looking 3D beat-'em-up with more polygons than you'll see in a whole season of Open University programmes.

Aside from the compulsory selection of funky special moves, you'll also notice weapons being hurled into the arena; pick these up and do with them what you will. Lonely types can play against the computer, but those of you with friends can indulge in a little two-way action. There are only two available fighters in this demo version - as you'd

expect, the final release will have skiploads more. Here's hoping it'll also feature a secret level in which you have to tie Garv Bushell to a chair and... (I really think that's enough! Just cos he's got a beard! - Ed).

Controls:		
Action	Player 1	Player 2
Left	A	Cursor Left
Right	D	Cursor Right
Jump	W	Cursor Up
Crouch	S	Cursor Down
Quick Punch	K	5
Hard Punch	1	8
Quick Kick	L	6
Hard Kick	J	4
Start Game	Spacebar	Return

Min. Specs: 486DX2/66 8Mb RAM Windows 95 48Mb HDD space free SVGA (DirectX)





HELEN DANIELS WINS: Hardly relevant, this, but just for the ecord, I'd really like to see a 3D polygon beat-'em-up featuring the cast of leighbours. I reckon Helen Daniels would look great as a texture-mapped varrior. And you could have old Des Clarke turning up at the end, as a kind of Satanic overlord. It'd be swell. Alternatively, how about a Gallagher brothers leat-'em-up? You could opt to play Liam or Noel, kick the shit out of each other and then spit at the rest of the band.

AOL BONUS CD

To install this month's AOL CD, go to Windows Explorer (or File Manager under Windows 3.x) and double click on the file Setup.exe. This will install the latest AOL software onto your PC. Once you've done this, go back to the CD and double click on the file Pptview.exe.

This will give you a very quick guide as to what Terris is all about and how to get on-line. Finally, before you log on (and to make getting to grips with the game easier), check out the Readme.txt file that's included on the CD. If you're still having trouble, ring the support line on: 0800 279 7444 for instant help.

INTERNET THINGIES

We've hurled a bundle of Internet utilities onto the CD because we're nice. Really. We want to come round to your house and stroke your hair. Assuming you've washed it during the last six months. Which you probably haven't, you useless bunch of stinking bastards, you.

On the basis that you can't have too much of a good thing, we've also lobbed in some other freebies - compression utilities, Direct X, Paint Shop Pro, new Windows drivers... we spoil you, you know. We really do.



It's better to give than to receive





SYNDICATE WARS the stylishly violent sequel to Syndicate available on RC ID



Hot new LucasArts news

nouncements from blg George's very own software division, plus new Jedi Knight shots to drool over.

RE YOU READY FOR THIS? EXCITING NEWS has broken of LucasArts' latest addition to the Star Wars collection of games. Rebellion sees the Empire and Rebellion forces collide in what is already being described as 'the ultimate Star Wars strategy game' (well, they would say that - it also happens to be the only Star Wars strategy game at the moment). Unlike previous Star Wars games from LucasArts, Rebellion places the player in the role of strategic commander of all resources, planets and forces controlled by the Empire or Rebel Alliance. A character-based, single or head-tohead game, Rebellion sets out to immerse the player in a variety of strategic and tactical challenges. To succeed, players fighting for the Empire must capture Luke Skywalker, Mon Mothma or destroy the Rebel headquarters. Those following the Rebel cause can rule supreme by capturing Darth Vader, The Emperor or by overthrowing the Imperial Seat at Coruscant. Very little has been shown as yet but sources claim a C&C-style of gameplay. Imagine all the Star Wars universe kit you'll have at your disposal!

The second huuuuuge announcement this month is The Curse of Monkey Island, effectively part three in the tremendously popular Guybrush Threepwood series. This time we'll find Guybrush on a quest to save Elaine Marley, his one true love, from the clutches of arch enemy LeChuck. As the game begins, the evil and wily buccaneer LeChuck is attempting to woo Elaine into becoming his undead bride. But, hoping to marry Elaine himself, Guybrush

unknowingly slips onto her finger a cursed ring that turns her into a gold statue. He must find a way to remove the curse. all the while battling scurvy-

ridden villains and pissed-up pirates in an attempt to prevent LeChuck from carrying out his sinister plans

"The Curse of Monkey Island will include all the elements that made the series great, but with a highly stylised, high resolution look that could not have been accomplished before," says co-project leader Jonathan Ackley. Graphically much has changed, with full



screen, film-quality animation playing a huge part in the proceedings, and so far it looks rather special. All the usual hilarity and brilliant puzzle-solving madness will feature, and from the game dubbed as "ideal for the pirate in all of us" how could it be otherwise?

Finally, and briefly: new Jedi Knight shots! PC Zone recently had a go of the latest version and can report our complete and utter pantwetting approval. Scout Walkers, polygonal Imperial forces (including all the recognisable bounty hunters), plus a particularly impressive 'humming' Light Sabre were already present, even though there's still much yet to be added to the game.

All three of the above titles are slated for an early '97 release, so watch out for full previews in an upcoming issue. Until then point your Web browser at http://www.lucasarts.com for more information. Z





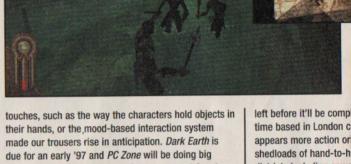
Darkness descends from Mindscape

edscape Bordeaux are French. Now mally we wouldn't allow anything nch into the magazine, but we we're so impressed by their games, e couldn't help ourselves.

O WHAT HAVE MINDSCAPE BEEN UP TO LATELY, apart from infecting everyone's desktops with Catz? Well, PC Zone were recently privy to a release viewing of two of their latest projects, both of which are being developed across the pond in France by an ambitious new development team. Although both names looked fantastic in the graphics department, the as that really caught our eye was Dark Earth. Accourantly first in a series of games to be set in the Farth universe, this action/adventure is already seeing up to be one of the games of 1996. Based Home conturies into the future, our light and airy planet has been transformed into a thick ball of murky fog said to be the result of a meteorite collision at the The truth may be something entirely different, but that will be for the player to find out. Wonderful high-res graphics portray a world of and decay. Characters, rendered real-time, move

manner that would fool

seem Desmond Morris on an off day. Amazing little



things with it in the very near future - so watch out.

Mindscape Bordeaux also have a second game in development called Nightmare Creatures which is also looking rather spiffy, even though there's still a year

left before it'll be completed. Again in full 3D, but this time based in London circa 1834, Nightmare Creatures appears more action oriented than Dark Earth, with shedloads of hand-to-hand combat spread over 15 districts including sewers, cemeteries, Westminster and the Docks.

For more info on these games, check out http://www.mindscape.com. 7







reak HAVOC! In the comfort of your own Mobile tillery Unit - offering the sturdy all round protection 10" armour plating with the luxury of vise control and full leather interior.





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do not reality sell weapons of global destruction. We will not supply bombs, tanks or fighters to anyone (even if you are over 18 with a full driving license). But you can have a FREE dema

Under Construction

MAGINE A SIM CITY TYPE GAME THAT DOESN'T DISAPPEAR UP ITS OWN ARSE WITH TONS OF BORING STATISTICS. IMAGINE A RESOURCE MANAGEMENT GAME WITH gorgeous graphics and interesting characters you can interact with in real-time. Add a hefty dollop of OTT humour and you've got Constructors from Acclaim, an impressive little people management number that was one of the most original and entertaining games we saw at the recent European Computer Trade Show. The general idea of the game is develop your own housing estate, while at the same time spoiling your enemies chances of developing his. There are lots of ways you can do this: a particularly fun tactic is to send lots of thugs around to his estate to have lots of wild parties, drink lots of beer, and generally wreck the place. His tenants will then piss off to pastures new (with any luck it will be your estate they go to) and his properties will go down in value

accordingly. You can also send ghosts around to scare his tenants off (honest) and send in football hooligans to 'disturb the peace' in their own inimitable style (screaming 'Ol!' repeatedly is their main tactic). All in all, Constructors is looking very promising indeed and you can be sure we'll be keeping a close eye on how it's shaping up. For more info contact Acclaim on 0171 344 5000. Z



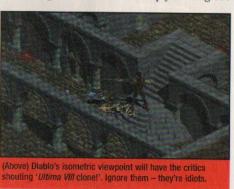


Starcraft and Diablo

If the software industry had an award for 'best newcomer' Blizzard Entertainment would ha certainly won it last year. Now with a reputation to live up to, the whole world is waiting for the next big thing...

ELATIVELY UNKNOWN UNTIL THE SMASH HIT Warcraft II arrived on the scene, Blizzard are now enjoying a period of ego-boosting prosperity and are currently producing some of the best games available on the PC at the moment. Good news it that there are more to follow in the upcoming months.

Starcraft, a real-time strategy game of interstellar combat, is similar in execution to the Warcraft games, but this time wrapped in a shiny new sci-fi coating. Three races - Terran, Protoss, and Zurg - collide in an attempt to gain dominance. Again, multi-player action is the order of the day with modem and serial options allowing up to eight players to battle it out in the same game. Rather than simply rushing out



a space version of Warcraft the developers have monster-ridden labyrinth beneath a decaying instead spent some time updating much of the town. As the player ventures deeper into the AI (so your forces don't end up trapped behind fiddly bits of scenery) and are currently working on some truly weird and wonderful weapons of future war. The game is to be released in February under the ZABLAC label and will no doubt attract a great deal of attention when it arrives. Before that, though, Blizzard are to unleash Diablo - a deceptively simple RPG set in a

catacombs they will discover weapons, mour, and magical treasures, and develop greater skills and abilities. Other people are able to join in the hack and slash fun as the game has built-in support for battle.net, as well as modem, serial. and network play. Check out the demo on this month's cover disc, then watch for a full

> review next month. More Blizzard info is available at http://www. blizzard. com. Z



Get im RAMBO



GENE WARS, [™] a totally new strategy war game from the creators of Populous® and Theme Park. [™] available on PCCD



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sport sport sport sport sport

Ivan Ardon (formerly Gavin Smith), manager of Athletic Wednesday is rumoured to have spent £6m on his new signings. When asked if his player selection is based on shrewd management foresight, or just a product of his obsession with dirty words, he replied "Bugger off. I'm playing with my floppy." Tragic.

Championship Manager 96-97 is available for PC CD ROM, Amiga and as an update disk for Championship

What they said about Championship Manager 2: Manager 2.

"QUITE SIMPLY THE BEST FOOTBALL MANAGEMENT SIM EVER RELEASED"

"BUY IT!"
COMPUTER LIFE 5/5



BRINGING ME CHAMPIONSHIP MANAGE PC REVIEW 9/10

"SIMPLY THE BEST" PC HOME 92%

Games landslide from Psygnosis

rynosis remain as prolific as with no less than 12 new releases on the way over the ext four months.

VERYONE'S ALREADY TALKING ABOUT WIPEOUT Blue Ice AND Destruction Derby 2 (see new shots adorning this page), all of Mach will be out come Christmas. The full IIII, though, can now be fully revealed. fortation II, funnily enough the sequel to Spencer's seminal adult-only adventure Market, looks great now that the graphics we been updated to support a high resolution This time there's a demonic sorcerer where out there, and he's stolen your His evil worshippers hound you as chaos agest and your homeland falls under the Muence of some deep midsummer magic. Image fully Ecstatica II will last a little longer the original did, which, for most people, and abruptly after only two days of solid play. Undead fans will raise an eyebrow or two an Alone In The Dark-style pointand click adventure about a reporter on the Manufacton Daily News who uncovers a sinister military base in the heart of small-town Manager What he finds there we'll have to wait and see, but you can be sure it'll want to eat



anything with a pulse. Zombieville is scheduled for the end of the year, but look out for a huge preview next month.

Monster Truck games are fashionable at the moment - Gremlin are working on one such game, Microsoft have one reviewed this very issue, and Psygnosis have the aptly titled Monster Trucks scheduled for the end of the year. Created by Reflections (the team behind Destruction Derby), this game includes Long Distance Endurance Rally, Short Circuit Racing, Stunt Challenges and Time Trials. Lens flare fans can also get their kicks in Monster Truck, which promises to be a graphical tour de force of mountainous, heavily texture-mapped terrain.

Of a similar vein (well, you get to drive things) is The Fallen, only this time the game is based in a futuristic setting with a sinister

police force hunting down undesirables in a sprawling metropolis racked with crime. Up to four players are able to fight it out in a number of fully interactive vehicles, even resorting to hand-to-hand if the situation dictates it.

Psygnosis have a number of stylish adventures on the cards too. City Of The Lost Children is based on the motion picture released earlier this year and features motion captured animations and a riddle laden plot adapted from the film itself. On the visual front City Of The Lost Children looks set to break new ground as you can see from the shots on this page, the backdrops are lavishly rendered, evoking a dark, brooding atmosphere. Sentient is a chatheavy RPG with an unconventional approach to the genre, and The Island Of Dr Moreau sees HG Wells time-travelling onto the PC for the first time (in letterbox format no less!). All will see the light of day within the next three or four months.

Finally, comes Alphastorm and Athanor. The former owing it's existence to Elite. Privateer et al – the latter a futuristic sports game based on characters from ancient Greek mythology.

And that, dear brethren, is about it for now, but if you want more information try http://www.psygnosis.com. Phew. 7





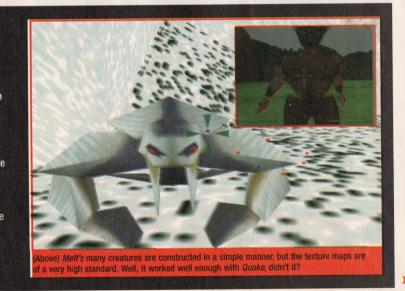


Iron Maiden's zombie skeleton mascot Eddie raises hell in his very first computer game outing.

S IF WE EVER NEEDED IT, IRON MAIDEN'S TWISTED MASCOT EDDIE IS to be star of the show in a new all-action game to be released through Funsoft at the end of the year. Melt's developers Virtual Studios owe of their new technology to years of experience working in the field of and their new game reflects this.

concept of *Melt* centres around eleven capsules, or 'pods', that have scattered throughout time – the objective being, to collect them all before music by Iron Maiden and alised in an array of psychedelic styles - all within a full 3D world -Melf does not follow a sequential script. Instead the player is allowed to formise the length of a single game to whatever fits their real world lifestyle minutes or many hours, it's up to you. But at the end of the day it's the issling that counts and Melt promises to keep the trigger finger moving at

For more information go to http://www.melt.com. Z











YOU'RE IN CHARGE NOW

"Unreally?!

Unreal has finally been snapped up by a big name games publisher. Guess who that could be...

EWS HAS JUST COME IN THAT GT INTERACTIVE are the lucky buggers who've signed the much talked-about Unreal from Epic Megagames. This revolutionary new 3D graphics engine has been whipping up a frenzy in the

Internet community for quite some time now, with speculation running rife as to who would eventually pick up the title for a world-wide release

Before now, all that had been seen were a few screenshots and a couple of ropey AVIs, but having seen (and played) the game we can report that iD do, at last, have some serious competition on their hands.

Running under Windows 95, Unreal at the moment is an engine without a game (a criticism that some may level at Quake), but what an engine

it is. Boasting an incredible array of display features, the true 3D environment is capable of running in up to 1024 x 768 in 24-bit colour. Dynamic lighting effects cast real-time shadows - particularly impressive when firing off a light-emitting weapon, such as a turnip on fire. MIP mapping has enabled the programmers to incorporate focus-shifting effects, which will blur nearby objects if you get up close to them. It's also been mentioned that the player's vision will blur momentarily if a headshot



Monster-wise Epic aren't giving too much away, but the fat basts with in-built gun hands

(see pic) look pretty mean already.

Pentium machines with in-built MMX™ technology will be able to take advantage of a huge range of graphical enhancements, not to mention significant performance

We've also heard that MicroProse have licensed the engine from Epic, but they're no allowed to release any of their Unreal games until Autumn next year. GT are looking at a spring release for their title, more details of which we'll bring as soon as we have them. Until then try either http://www.epicgames. com or http://www.gtinteractive.com. Z



There goes The **Neverhood**

Microsoft and Hollywood team up to make the games that dreams are made of.

K GAMESPLAYERS WILL SOON BE able to see the first fruits of the partnership between some of the biggest names in the entertainment and computer industries when DreamWorks Interactive, the joint venture between Bill Gates' Microsoft and DreamWorks SKG (headed by Steven Spielberg, David Geffen and Jeffrey Katzenberg - hence the SKG tag) release their first PC game at the end of October.



The Neverhood is a Pentium-only point-and-click adventure with a

difference. The difference being the game's graphics have been shot digitally using a 'claymation' style of animation, in much the same way that Wallace and Gromit came to life through the genius of Nick Park and Aardman Animations.

"Most 3D art in games these days looks too robotic," said project leader Doug TenNapel, ex-Shiny Entertainment programmer, "but we wanted to bring some 'life' into our games by using clay animation for the visuals." Over three tons of clay was used during production, most of which went into the huge purpose-built sets (the biggest measuring almost 25 foot square!). Ancient conspiracies and moral decision-making is the order of the day, with a liberal dousing of humour carrying the story through its sometimes adult and often serious course. The Neverhood will be reviewed in full next issue. Z

Trash-It!

Tool up for the ultimate frenzy of devastation as the greatest orgy of destruction smashes its way onto your PC

BVIOUSLY BIG FANS OF BEAVIS AND BUTT HEAD, THOSE DESTRUCTIVE chaps at Rage appear to have devised a harmless way in which to pulverise anything and everything in their latest arcade platform romp entitled Trash-It! With three modes of play, up to 16 players can quash their pent-up aggression as they tear down concrete and steel with a variety of different hammers and implements

The story tells of the evil Dr. Moonbeam who has arrived in town, planting thousands of concrete seeds (whatever they are), in order to trap Herculean saviour of the timid, trapped civilians, your task will be to demolis nammoth concrete buildings and crush the stone empire of Dr. Moonbeam

Out in December, over one hundred levels of rubble-reducing, multi-player action should keep the midnight oil burning, especially if these impressive screenshots are anything



oth wingmen down

ME TO EJECT?

Wayl You're flying Super EF2000 - Europe's 21st century air-superiority fighter, armed with sophisticated defensive and offensive systems known to man. Proclaimed the best melation of its kind by the world's leading PC magazines, EF2000 is now available on 95, with a wealth of exciting new features. Such as an enhanced version of our war ensembles system, which puts you in the middle of a thousand plane war. Or the new mission for precise tactical control of your flights. There's even a custom-editor that lets you sensituat the most awesome aerial battles ever seen. And for the ultimate challenge, there's a est of multi-player options that let you fight real-live opponents.

TIME TO GET SOME HELP?

was to roal counterpart EF2000 is designed to be easy for pilots to fly. Yet even plots know when to buckle-down, swallow their pride and ask for help. Super soon gives you instant access to a context-sensitive, multimedia pilot training Exploiting the Windows format to its fullest, Super EF2000 employs pointwhethek graphics for rapid access to vital info - precisely when you need it most.





Fly Super EF2000 on your PC the ultimate combat flight simulation for Windows '95.

PC Zone - 97%: the highest scoring game ever reviewed. **Computer Gaming World** best simulation game of the year, 1996.









oodness reflects the light; and evil, bears the seed of all darkness

Queen - The Eye 3D0 on PC

Thunderbolts and lightning – very, very frightening!

ESPITE THE UNFORTUNATE DEMISE OF THEIR MOUSTACHIOED FRONTM. some five years ago, dubiously-coiffured pomp rockers Queen simply refuse to die. Not content with the suspicious regularity of the discovery of 'long lost tracks', their twitching corpse looks set to the recognition of the pc platform. The first batch receive a further lease of life with the release by Electronic Arts of Quee the lease of life with the release by Electronic Arts of Quee the lease of life with the release by Electronic Arts of Quee the lease of life with the release by Electronic Arts of Quee the lease of life with the release by Electronic Arts of Quee the lease of life with the release by Electronic Arts of Quee the lease of life with the release by Electronic Arts of Quee the lease of life with the release by Electronic Arts of Quee the lease of life with the release by Electronic Arts of Quee the lease of life with the release by Electronic Arts of Quee the lease of life with the release by Electronic Arts of Quee the lease of life with the release by Electronic Arts of Quee the lease of life with the release by Electronic Arts of Quee the lease of life with the life with - The Eye, an action-adventure crafted around the music and imagery of the band. For those not comfortable with Queen's unique brand of camp pomposity and lyrical ambiguity, it sounds like a horrible idea. But die-hard fans can rest easy in the knowledge that this potentially worrying example of the music/gaming crossover can be nestling safely in their stockings this Christmas.

Cast as the heroic Dubroc, the player is charged with the task of overcoming numerous complex obstacles in each of five futuristic, post-apocalyptic domains, each inspired by the iconography of a key Queen album. Whether the scenario associated with A Day At The Races

will involve betting through the card at Kempton Park is unconfirmed, but some interesting concepts are possible, particularly when you consider that Queen once had an album called Jazz, replete with a free poster of hundreds of naked women straddling bicycles. Scaramouche, scaramouche, can you do the fandango? Z



t's a bit of an 'Anima

Game of the film, yeah – but game of the TV advert? Are spicy sausages really that popular?

VID TELLY WATCHERS WILL BE NO DOUBT BE PLEASED TO HEAR THAT the cult sausage hero of those extremely loud and violent Peperami adverts is about to become a cult sausage hero in an extremely loud nd violent computer game of his own.

The sausage that makes your breath stink takes centre stage in Animal, a

seemingly riotous adventure game based in the town of Snackopolis, and co-starring the likes of the Disco Biscuit, Yoghurt 'Potstitutes' and Carlos the Carrot. Hmm. Rescuing the captured Dr. Pepereinstein, is the primary goal, which involves a large amount of logical thinking and puzzle on the way.

Ade Edmondson is being paid sackloads of cash to provide some of the voices in what has been described as the 'first ever Sausage Role-Playing Game' (groan). Animal mixes traditional point-and-clickery jiggery pokery with a smattering of Doom-style shooting and is held together with a variety of 3D visuals spread over 120 locations. By 'eck – the mind boggles. Developed by Microtime Media for Ocean

Animal will be out in November. Unless. of course, the stupid thing doesn't eat itself before we get a nibble ourselves. For more info call Microtime Media on 0181-466 1566. 7

Illuming their much anticipated M2 technology to hatsushita for a cool \$100 million, 300 now has money se spend developing games for other people's machines.

3DO, THE INTERNAL PUBLISHING AND DEVELOPMENT ARM OF THE the well-known 3DO Company, has announced a host of games an assess planned in the run up to Christmas.

Quasar, a mindlessly violent blaster first seen on the ill-fated me seemole, is due any time now. We thoroughly approve of Quasar's 3D manufacture rapid fire action and, spread over ten gruelling missions, the manufacture of the gameplay will undoubtedly appeal to manly shoot 'em up fans the world over.

Madefore, an 'on-the-rails' shoot 'em up that didn't do too well on the and Decathlon are both on the verge of release, as is the much man about Internet role-playing extravaganza Meridian 59 (see our On-

line section for further details). Studio 3DO's Game Guru 'game enhancer' (or cheating device) just missed our deadline and will be reviewed next issue.

Further down the line (December to be precise), and paying homage to the classic arcade game Super Sprint, Nitro Racers is one of those single screen, overhead racing games that caters for multi-player sessions without the need for network. Z



Space Orb gamepad

the needs VR when you've got a gamepad like this?

IN MEAL LIFE PEOPLE DON'T THINK ABOUT HOW THEY MOVE, THEY JUST With 3D games, players are limited to the 2D capabilities of the boyboard, mouse or joystick but the Space Orb 360 breaks the barrier of limity, linear keyboard or joystick control with full digital 360 control in any and every direction. Simply twist, Manage through six directions and Bob's yer uncle! lully programmable buttons and a convenient indemiser utility helps personalise the *Space Orb* to ma player's very own style of play. More info. can be at http://www.spacetec.com Z

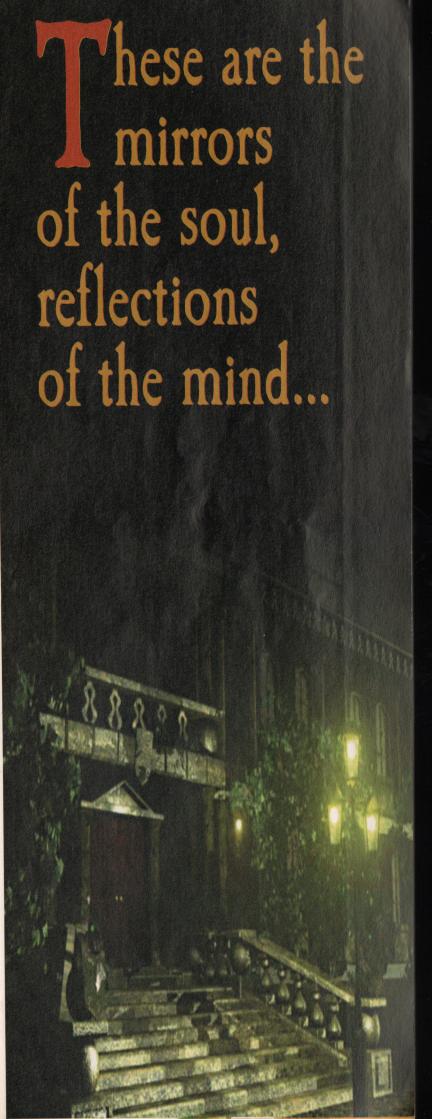
Suck, don't blow

Fraise the lord as a tiny vacuum cleaner marks the will be a second to the second

IX LIFE NEEDS REVITALISING? DOG NEEDS GROOMING? OR COULD YOUR keyboard do with a quick once over? Answer yes to any of the above and you could do with getting hold of the new Mini Vacuum Cleaner from Jessop. Priced at an incredible £9.99 and looking more like an Mortine toothbrush than anything else, the Mini Vacuum Cleaner is ideal

les use on electrical equipment, has stereos and computers. Whe kit includes a dustbag for the angled nozzle plus a bottle at cleaning spray, cloth, lint-free and cotton buds. How www.you afford not to get one? Available from your local shop or by mail order on M116 232 0432. Z





ook to the there lies the battleground...

Ubisoft threesomeFour new games

The world was wowed by Ubisoft's original Rayman. Now

NE OF THE FIRST EVER GAMES TO MAKE USE OF INTEL'S MMX GRAPHICS ne of the first ever dames to white our accelerator technology will be Ubisoft's new futuristic racing game POD. In fact, Intel were so pleased with the performance of the software that they have been using early versions to show off what their new co-processor can do. It is claimed that POD is capable of running in a resolution of 640x480 at a rate of 30 frames per second, although a P120 is required to achieve this kind of speed. So far, features include; horizontal split screen play; new, downloadable tracks from the Ubisoft web site; bundled cable for serial play; 12 different tracks; and eightplayer modem, LAN or Internet options. POD will be out in December.

Before that, though, comes the long-awaited PC version of Street Racer. A hit some years ago on the 8-bit consoles, PC Street Racer offers similar world of evil wrong-doer Belial. Top coder Tony Crowther and his team 'madcap' Mario Kart action, but this time runs at 60 frames per second (1 may be working long and hard on a new 3D engine based on what we first saw and boasts eight player simultaneous action, instead of the usual four.

Last, but not least, comes news of a follow-up to the hugely enjoyable platform romp Rayman. Provisionally entitled Rayman II, the lovable, limbless freak returns next Spring in a new adventure. Let's just hope this time that the game is slightly more forgiving than its predecessor. Which was bloody difficult to say the least.

But anyway, http://www.ubisoft.com holds all the answers. Z

Relative newcomers to the games scene, Grolier Interactive have signed up the ubiquitous Simis to

It's still early days yet, but PC Zone recently got a sneak peek at Solar Wars

and an, as yet, unnamed Solar System simulator that will be part game and

part educational. The former title promises complex heads-up combat against

waves and waves of attacking alien forces, whereas the latter is said to be a



keep the ball rolling.

HESE DAYS, WHEREVER YOU turn you'd have to be blind

(or worse, without a head), to

miss spotting a PC game by Londonbased developers Simis. With titles

on the go for both Warner and Eidos.

it came as a bit of a surprise to

have been swiped for a release

hear that two more of their games



more sedate affair - encouraging

than death and destruction. Grolier

claim that Simis are in the process

of constructing a blindingly accurate

model of our very own solar system

for this game. Let's just hope it

doesn't take 50 years to get from

one planet to another, otherwise

things may become a little tedious.

exploration and discovery, rather

there's news of a follow-up, plus two new racing games too. From Gremin

and since the release of Euro 96, Gremlin Interactive have, at last, something more to shout about.

of the Haunting, the biggest and most supensive game Gremlin have ever put with man of the art SGI cut-scenes, Realms Of the story of young adventurer num mandall - a man trapped inside the



Two hours of video footage, motion captured 3D making sprites and a variety of unusual and interesting weapons mix together managed in what could be the most terrifying adventure ever seen on a PC. and blasting action set in the infinitely of Misplaced Optimism. Despite the silly name, this huge conurbation standard constructed of an infinite number of massive buildings - the ultimate used being to escape from the confines of the city.

was ancient families fighting for control of a sandy planet sounds very similar to were membern's Dune, if you ask me, but we won't hold that against it. Dedicated to the admitsulation of the house of set, you are 'of the elite', the people of Osiris born

for a purpose, to pilot the ancient sandships of the Gods and bring glory and freedom to the Horus empire.

Finally, there's Re-Loaded - the follow-up to the successful PlayStation shoot 'em up Loaded. Featuring even more brutal violence, it blasts its way PC-wards in November. For more information look up http://www.gremlin.com. Z



DID's F22

whaddaya know?! Another F22 simulator on the way! met that anyone's complaining.

MASTERS OF ALL THINGS FLIGHT-RELATED, RECENTLY UNVEILED IIX F22 to stunned audiences at the recent European Computer Trade Show in London.

Desen under Windows 95, F22 not only improves massively on EF2000's and depth, but version 2.0 of the proven WarGen campaign

much easier to and control in the field of manufact. Created in munction with the authoritative Handd Air Power anurnal, F22 **Interporates** all of the latest am hnological and Intelligence parkering facilities, plus a new and

amulator is now



and an engine lan advanced graphics performance. Accelerated versions are also desired, taking advantage of the new range of graphics cards available which may rocket once this is released towards

DBD's web site is at http://www.did.com for more information. 🛚 🥻 🥻





Prey in trouble?

The future of 3D Realms' much talked-about Prey was, last week, in the balance after the recent departure of a number of lead programmers to John Romero's new company Hipnotic Interactive, 3D Realms' President George Broussard was quick to refute claims of the collapse of the project, commenting thus:

"We expect this will only be a little 'speed bump' in Prey's development. Nothing to worry about at all. In short Prev has had a minor setback, new people will be brought on board at once to fill the new spots. The engine technology is solid and intact. Prey lives and you can expect it in late 1997, according to original plan, or 'when it's finished'.



"I will continue to be Executive Producer on Prey as I was with Duke 3D and will probably bring in someone new as Assistant Producer to help guide the project and relieve the workload. Again, we know how this looks to the outside world, but rest assured that we aren't panicking at all here.

"These folks will be missed, but the bulk of the Prey team is here, more motivated than ever and things will go on."

② Citizens goes to Cranberry Sauce

Discerning PC fans will have read extensively about the pending Citizens, scheduled for a '96 release by MicroProse. Potential purchasers shouldn't hold their breath though. as the entire project has now been taken over by Jon (Match Day) Ritman's Cranberry Source, and is destined to see the light of day in the Autumn of next year.

In contrast to many conventional sim games, Citizens will concentrate heavily on individual characters, hence its 'virtual soan opera' tag. With over 30 different personalities interacting under a sophisticated Al system, the potential for twisted occurrences is large. Bodies under the patio, anyone?

Shoot & Surf: Director's Cut

News gremlins swept across the office last month, tripping over our writers, causing all kinds of bother. In one isolated incident, the address and telephone number of Shoot & Surf fell off the page as the magazine left the building to go to press. After much searching and swearing, we eventually found it sat nestling behind a festering bin in the corner of the room and are now able to print the full director's cut of said news piece.

So, to recap; take a copy of this magazine (or the last if you're that way inclined) to the people that run the place, show them this snippet of babble, but this time say "Excuse me, I'm an important person. I read *PC Zone*, and I would like to purchase two hours of sweaty, intense network play, for the price of one", and your request will be fulfilled.

Shoot & Surf can be reached at; 13 New Oxford Street, London (call 0171-419 1183), with even more info available at the following ocation; http://www.shootnsurf.co.uk. Phew.

We are BMG

Controversy reigns as BMG announce. among many other things, the first ever 'joy riding' simulator. They're unrepentant looking forward to a fruitful year ahead.

MG INTERACTIVE HAVEN'T HAD MUCH TO SHOUT about games-wise in the past, but now the company are parading an impressive and fully-packed release schedule with a number of interesting titles on the way.

Spring '97 will see the arrival of DMA Design's Grand Theft Auto. Created by the people who brought you Lemmings, Grand Theft Auto is a mindlessly fun excursion into the world of car thievery and drug trafficking. Viewed from overhead, the aim of the game is to rack up points by stealing cars while avoiding police detection. The gratuitous mowing down of innocent civilians is encouraged, as is the odd re-spray to fool the hapless 'dibble'. Grand Theft Auto, in the eyes of some people, may puncture the hymen of respectability, and although we at PC Zone neither condone or encourage this sort of behaviour, in our opinion, DMA have come up with a top idea for a computer game.

Rocket Science have four new titles in development, to be release through BMG over the

next few months. Rocket Jockey is a sort of futuristic polo; Obsidian is an adventure designed and written by a bunch of people that, as the press release puts it "lost the plot a long time ago"; Gannymede we don't know much about; and The Space Bar, created by Steve Meretzky (whose previous adventures include Infocom's classic Planetfall and The Hitchhiker's Guide To The Galaxy), which is a sci-fi thriller with visuals designed by Ron Cobb of Star Wars cantina fame. All are obviously looking top-hole, but ultimately it's how they play that counts so we'll reserve final judgement until we get out mitts on them.

Other BMG biggies include Alan Snow's Duck City - from the man who brought P.A.W.S. to the PC and described it as "a compendium of duck fun for your computer", and You Don't Know Jack - an innovative interactive gameshow that proved immensely popular in the States. Rumour has it that Reeves & Mortimer have been signed to provide the voices for You Don't Know Jack, which immediately elevates it to 'must-have'

> Firo & Klawd, a strangely monikered ape/cat double act, debut next Spring in a cheery isometric arcade adventure. Developed by Learnington Spa-based Interactive Studios, it will feature simultaneous two-player action through a number of different backdrops, including sewers, a scrapyard and a chemical plant.

status in our book.

Finally from BMG there's Exhumed; a first person shoot 'em up with a decidedly Egyptian theme. The PC version has been in development for some time but we've had a look at the Play-Station version which left us wanting to see more.

rand Theft Auto's overhead view zooms in and out as the

bove) Will Grand Theft Auto encourage car crime? Did Doom

rage kids to cut each other up with chainsaws

BMG's on-line facilities at http://www.bmg.com will no doubt offer more information than we can fit into such a small space as this. Z





Siege and Wreckin Crew

metruction on the road and death we the battlements. Just what ma Doctor ordered.

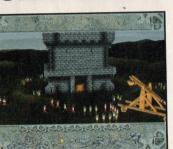
THE LOOKING FOR THAT ELUSIVE FIRST big hit. Telstar recently announced a essiple of new titles that could finally the business for them.

hand in the 14th century, Siege uses a duly rendered, 3D game engine that allows the planer to view the action from many wantage points. Wander the lands and take control of castles and villages,

many every means at your disposal. Part real-time strategy game, part arcade names. Teletar's Siege is already looking very promising, even though the in-house must be sment team insist the game is still almost a year away from release. Management, is a hot rod racing game that incormarket combat and stunt elements into the gameplay. Telstar claim that most makers day racing games tend to concentrate far too much on the simulation end of the driving spectrum, ignoring the qualities that made Hard Drivin', Power Drift and Hard to popular in the past. Wreckin Crew aims to redress the balance by putting

the fun back into the genre. Up to 32 players will be able to fight it out across a network with a huge number of cars and tracks to choose from. Due out before Christmas, it will be interesting to see how Wreckin Crew fares against the more serious simulation field it is attempting to surpass.

If you're seeking further Telstar enlightenment, this can be had on 01932 222232 or http://www.telstar.co.uk. Z



Champ Manager 2 '96-97 update disk

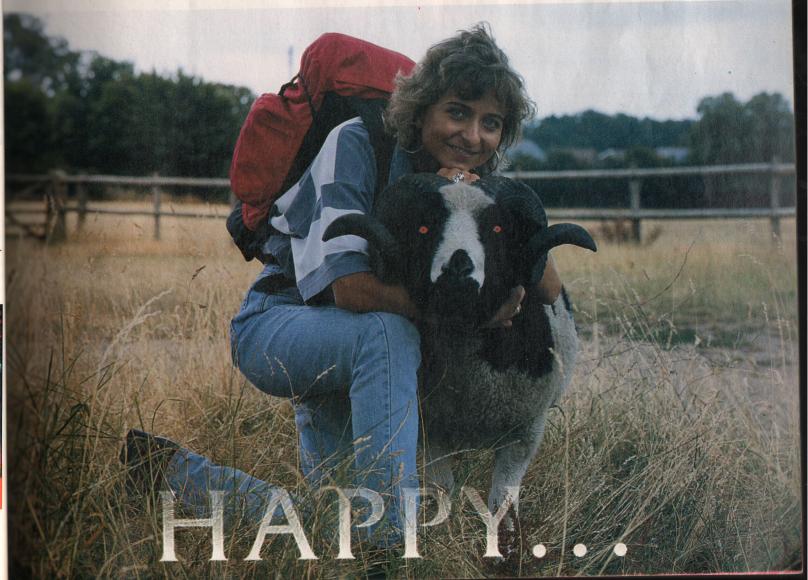
Stuck in the footballing middle ages? Then try your hand at winning the new update from Eidos.

O THE FOOTBALL SEASON IS UNDERWAY ONCE AGAIN. championship, Newcastle are faltering early on and Leicester City supporters already have little o shout about. Not much changes. Or does it? In act, the footballing world changes with alarming egularity as any discerning fan knows, and Eidos Interactive is reacting to those sensatio summer transfers by releasing an *update disk* to oring your PC footie up to date. So now you can take the helm at Newcastle, safe in the knowledge that it'll be your last season if your new 15million signing doesn't score at least 40 goals this season.

The '96-97 update disk is available now, and to celebrate its release PC Zone has ten copies to give away in a fantasto mini competition, comprised of one, simple question. Answer the following teaser and stay fashionable:

Name the famous cricketer who once played football for Scunthorpe United.

CPZ610BA Customer Interface, Bradley Pavilions, Bradley Stoke North, Bristol BS12 0BQ. Entries in before 12th December 1996 and the usual rules apply. Z



Dispatches

GT boosts support

GT Interactive have overhauled their technical helpline in light of the recent Quake release. The company have appointed the UK-based support specialist Softbank PSC to handle their entire range of titles across Europe, providing unlimited support in English, French and German. The majority of calls are expected to be installation queries, mainly from Quake which was expected to ship around 400,000 copies on its first day of release.

Naked Gun game?

News is filtering through of a licensed Naked Gun game from Discworld II developer, Perfect Entertainment. Nothing has actually been seen yet, but expect a 3D driving section (complete with red flashing light on top of the car, no doubt) with mad bits that allow the player to zip past naked girls frolicking around in communal showers. Ahem. Watch this space..

Sid Meier signs to Origin

News of Sid Meier signing with Origin was met with a mixture of surprise and anticipation in the office this month. No news of what his first project is to be but as soon as we find out, you'll be the first to know.

Sega and Namco do Power VR

So impressed were Sega with VideoLogic's new PowerVR accelerator card that they've signed a development contract to take advantage of its awesome power. Namco are already working on titles for the system - a joint venture between VideoLogic and NEC with Rave Racer slated as a first release. Although no one will comment on what Sega are planning to release in support of the card, Virtua Fighter 3 seems like a sure-fire bet.

Wing Commander TV series

US TV audiences are currently being wowed by a new 13-part Wing Commander animated series that should make its way over the pond sometime next year. Actors Mark Hamill, Malcolm McDowell and Tom Wilson have reprised their roles by lending their voice talents to the show. Described as 'Wing Commander. The Early Years', Wing Commander Academy is set 20 years before the first Wing Commander game. The new series traces the exploits of Blair and his wingmen as they are thrown into battle with the Kilrathi during their last year of training.

Producer Larry Latham commented: "The show is very cinematic, as opposed to cartoony, very stylised in its approach, but still grounded in the covenants of good story-telling." Unsurprisingly, Origin have mooted a 'game

of the TV series of the game' using cartoon animation instead of the usual live action stuff.

Grand Prix Manager 2

As everyone that played it knows, the original Grand Prix Manager from MicroProse had a few problems in the bug department. But Grand Prix Manager 2 promises to make up for earlier discrepancies. This latest sim will give the player complete control over every aspect of managing and developing a world famous racing team through a massive ten season campaign. From driver contract negotiation through testing and sponsorship nance, Grand Prix Manager 2 is sure to knock the socks off F1 enthusiasts that like their games, er, detailed.

Grand Prix Manager 2 will be Windows-only and is slated for release later this year. For more info check out http://www.microprose.com.

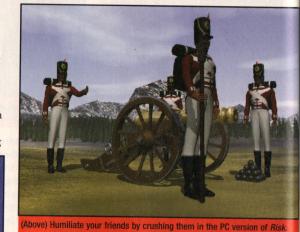
Risky business from Hasbro

Big bucks board game manufacturer Hasbro announced a ton of new PC games recently. Here's an update of what's currently on the cards.

ince news filtered through last month of game giant Hasbro's intention to develop and publish a whole range of PC titles based on their well-known board games, we can report that more announcements have been made.

Trillion-selling Risk is to be enhanced for the CD-ROM format. "The game's timeless strategic challenge has allowed us to create a true multimedia gaming experience which adds an extra dimension without ever losing





that essential Risk feel," said Clive Robert, head of Development at Hasbro Interactive.

In addition, versions of Cluedo and Yahtzee are also in the pipeline. Cambridge-based Millennium Interactive have also been signed by Hasbro to develop two further games for a '97 release - one an interactive version of Beast Wars, the other Hasbro are keeping tight-lipped about. ${\bf Z}$

Eidos' Winter Collection

Not content with the 20 or so PC titles currently have in production, Eidos Interactive had to go and complicate things by announcing even more...

LD SUPERHEROES NEVER DIE - THEY JUST END UP IN THEIR OWN COMPUTER GAME. THE INCREDIBLE HULK -The Pathenon Saga is the latest attempt to bring credibility to a big green man who wears ripped purple trousers and growls a lot. As anyone who has seen the dreadful The Death Of The Incredible Hulk knows, this is a nigh-on impossible task, but this didn't prevent Eidos from having a shot at it. Developed by Attention To Detail (previously big into Atari Jaguar development although the less said about that the better), The Pathenon Saga mixes two and three-dimensional adventuring with beat 'em up and puzzle-solving elements. If The Hulk is your thing, mark November in your diary and start saving up.

Newly announced Full-On F1 is a no-holes-barred racing game that avoids the complexities of the likes of F1GP2 n favour of instantaneous action and exhilarating speed. A heavy emphasis has been placed on the crash and bash nature of Formula 1 motor racing which, although hardly authentic, I'm sure will be great fun. All the drivers, teams, tracks and cars of the 1995 season have been licensed for inclusion in the game with a whole host of camera angles n which the action can be viewed. Developers Teque have the chequered flag in sight so expect a review in the next issue of PC Zone.

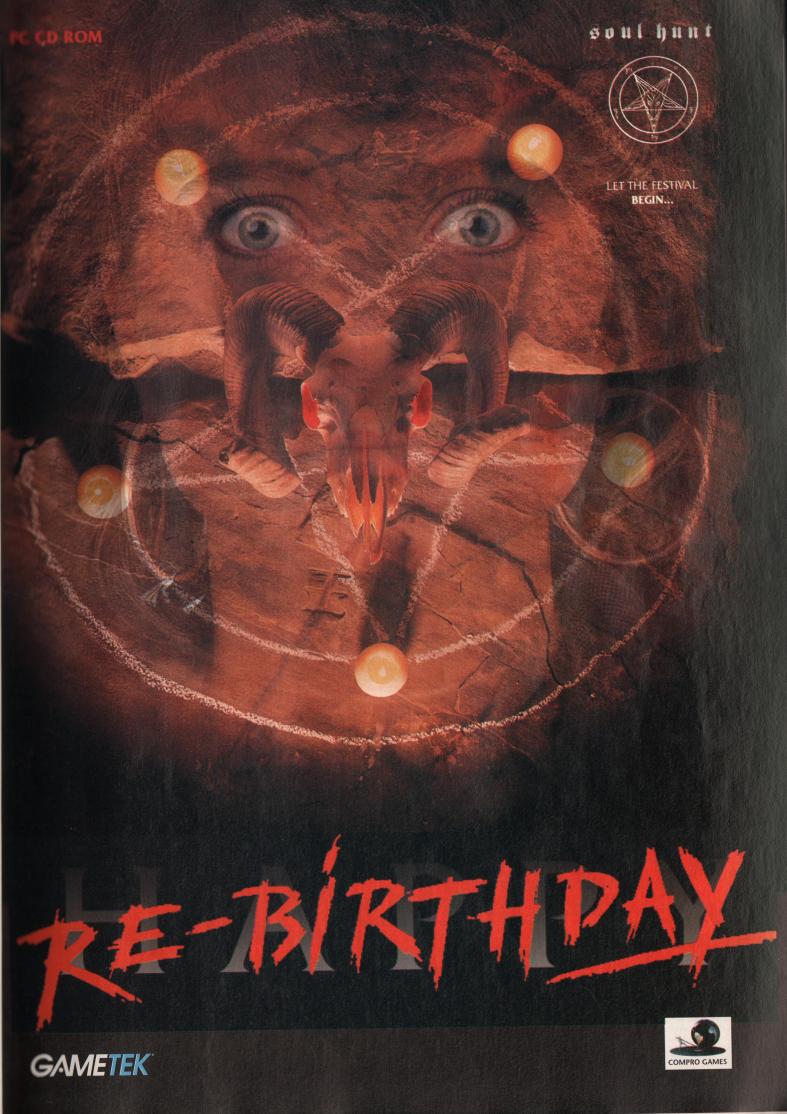
Finally from Eidos comes Terracide - a Descent beater from those semi-famous guys and gals down at Simis. laving been responsible for a whole host of authentic flight combat sims in the past (not to mention the heavyweight Flight Sim Toolkit) Simis have turned their hand, and their advanced 3D graphics engine, to more futuristic matters in a tale of invading alien forces and lone crusaders battling it out in space. Already looking visually magnificent, Terracide is not due until August '97 so that's about all you're gonna get from us for now.

Eidos' web site has more details on all of the above three games on Http://www.eidos.com. 7









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ESTABLISHED 1986

'Arthur C. Clarke's RAMA

It's been a book, and now it's about to become a game. Is RAMA destined to be remembered as 'the party that everyone wanted to go to' instead?

AMA STARTED OUT AS A SERIES OF CULT novels (which sold more than seven million copies world-wide) from the pen of Arthur C. Clarke - the acknowledged master of modern sci-fi and author of 2001: A Space Odyssey - and Gentry Lee, chief engineer at NASA (most notably for his involvement in the mission to explore Jupiter). The authors devised the game themselves, and bring to it not only an intimate knowledge of the universe of RAMA and their own experience of space technology, but also a humanistic vision.



As part of the regular news service

to our readers, this new section will

feature brand new shots from games

that, previously, we haven't been able

Our first report of Activision's 'road movie

game' Interstate 76 appeared last issue,

but there was little in the way of piccies because

and played a very early version we can update

our readers as to how it's looking. As mentioned

and there are twenty-five cars and twenty-five

previously, large Afros and 'Lionel Blairs' appear in

abundance (the game being set in 1976 and all that),

not much has so far been shown. Now, having seen

to show you much of. Crikey, what

INTERSTATE 76

top geezers we are.

Sierra On-Line are to release the game before Christmas and seem very proud of what their developers have achieved, dubbing the game "a turning point in the history of multimedia". More than 3000 3D scenes tell the story of a team of brilliant scientists on a mission to explore the mysteries of an ancient alien civilisation. The adventure is even helped along by FMV advice from the great Mr Clarke himself.

Similarities are apparent between Sierra's RAMA and LucasArts' The Dig, but it's more likely that the developers down at Skywalker





http://www.sierra.com.

Ranch drew inspiration from the original RAMA novels, than the other way around. Information on any of Sierra On-Line's products, including RAMA, can be found at



RED BARON II

Anticipation is running high for Sierra's Red Baron II - an updated version of

the now ancient prequel which first came out on the PC almost four years ago. These shots are still from a pretty early version of the game, but not a lot has been shown by Sierra so far. Remember, PC Zone readers saw them here first!



1943: EUROPEAN AIR WAR Two years ago MicroProse brought out the

completely brilliant 1942: Pacific Air War, and a sequel has been on the cards for some time now. Using suggestions from users of 1942: Pacific Air War, 1943: European Air War changes the feel of the game to reflect the new theatre. Air combat in Europe was very different from the Pacific in many ways, so this new combat sim, out in December, is sure to be more than just the original with changed graphics.



JETFIGHTER III

Feast your eyes on these latest shots of Jetfighter III. Almost complete now, and ooking completely spiv, JF III simulates not only the ubiquitous F22, but also the F14 and the F/A18. As a member of the UN Rapid Deployment Force, your mission is to combat aggression around the world. Tackle Argentinians as they battle for control of Chile, or if you're really up for trouble, circle the waters around Cuba. A full review should appear within the next couple of months.



SID MEIER'S

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Gamer 96% Game of the Month - highest score ever even! (March 96) "...even alter four years, no strategy game has come close to Civilization. And now it's wice as good..." (also voted best game of all-time in top 100 PC games survey! June 96)

ldge 9/10 (May 96) "...quite simply an astonishing achievement... cannot be more highly recommended..."

Computer Life 5/5 Game of the Month (May 96) will take over your life...brilliant with knobs on...you can improve on perfection..."

GamesMaster 95% (April 96) "...one of the most complete Recommended (Mar 96) and engrossing PC games ever...dangerously addictive...a work of genius, that's what it is..."

PC Format 90% (May 96) "...every now and then, a game comes along that's so good it changes people's perceptions of a genre... one of MicroProse's greatest releases ever... it's a must... could change your opinion of strategy games forever..."

PC Home 91% (April 96) "offers just about everything you could want..."

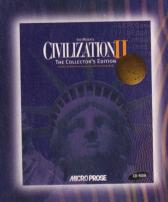
PC Zone 90% "...exactly the right balance..."

Strategy Plus (USA) 5/5 Stamp of Approval (June 96) CD-Rom Mag (France) 5/5 (June 96) Gambler (Poland) 95% (May 96) Hyper (Australia) 96% (April 96) Micromania (Spain) 97% Mikrobitti (Finland) 94% (May 96) PC Player (Germany) 6/6 (May 96) Riki (Czech Republic) 5/5 (April 96)

Once in a while a game comes along which captures the imagination of the world, crossing the line from 'Great' to 'Classic' status such a game is Sid Meier's Civilization® II

Gaining highest-ever scores from all over the world and winning the British Interactive Multimedia Association Best Game of 1996 award, Civilization® II is truly the best strategy game ever made...and there has never been a better time to experience the wonder of Civilization® II for yourself! A deluxe Collectors' Edition is out now, including the full 400-page official strategy guide from Prima, plus the new Conflicts in Civilization scenarios*. THE ULTIMATE CHALLENGE AWAITS YOU...

For new release information and hints and tips on selected games call the MicroProse Classified Line on 0891 555 111. This call is more expensive than a normal call and will terminate after six minutes at a maximum cost of £2.94 Please seek permission of whoever pays the bill before you call.











ourprice

THE CHARLES OF THE STATE OF THE Welcome to PC Zone's very own version of The Chart Show, sponsored by Our Price. Each month it'll feature not only the most up-to-date chart listing the Top Ten bestselling PC CD-ROM titles, but it will also play host to exclusive news and competitions



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Welcome once again to our monthly Our Price page, bringing you the latest news and views from Our Price stores around the country. It's the easiest way to find out which games you should be checking out - just run your eyes over our countdown of the Top 10 best-selling PC CD-ROM titles. And what's more, we give you a chance to win all ten of them.

This month customers at Our Price will be able to take advantage of an exclusive offer when they buy a copy of Z, one of the hottest new games around – an offer not to be missed as it includes an extra CD containing the Director's cut version of the game! So make your way to your local Our Price sharpish before stocks run out.

Also available at selected Our Price stores will be Quake, set to be the biggest game ever!

If you want to take part in this month's Our Price Top 10 prize giveaway, put pen to paper and answer the question below. Good luck! Send your entries to the usual address.

What is the name of the TV presenter in *MegaRace 2?*

Rules & Restrictions: All entries must be received by 15 November 1996. No correspondence will be entered into – if you ring us up we'll subject you to vitriolic abuse before bunging you into the lions' cage at London Zoo. The Editor's decision is final and the winners will be notified by post. All other usual restrictions apply, so don't even think about it, okay?

WATCH THIS SPACE FOR MORE NEWS FROM OUR PRICE NEXT MONTH

DISCLAIMER: The Top 10 printed is correct at the time of going to press but positions, titles and prices may vary throughout the mon



He shall come to earth granting all those who serve under him Ultimate Power, Knowledge and Eternal Life and he shall be of 3DO and bear the symbol of The Game Guru. 1.10.96

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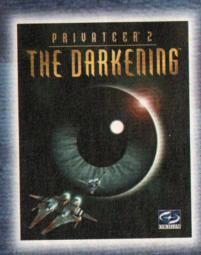
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SAN

mening in the front window,

the 'good times'

had lay within.

Their toilet is so delightful, they felt it deserved to be

Toilets are in short supply around Oxford, and therefore it

The window display was designed by an imbecile.

Most peculiar of all, the word "Loo" was placed immediately after the word "DANCE". Perhaps the two words were supposed to be one phrase, i.e "DANCE LOO" - referring to a vast, strobe-lit lavatory where people reel and jig to the latest experimental drum and bass releases while simultaneously urinating all over the floor and each other. The next Big Thing? Readers in Oxford, please let me know.

Rebellion Software

Anyhows, let me tell you a few things about Rebellion. Now, unless you count Heartbeat starring Nick Berry,

nothing is more boring than reading lists of facts about businesses. Therefore, to keep things interesting and spicy, I'm going to write it in the style of The Sun. Ready?

Their first and so far, most famous release was Aliens Vs Predator on the Atari JAGUAR, a graphically STUNNING Doom-a-like which, despite a bit of MOANING from a few disgruntled knockers, nevertheless left most Atari

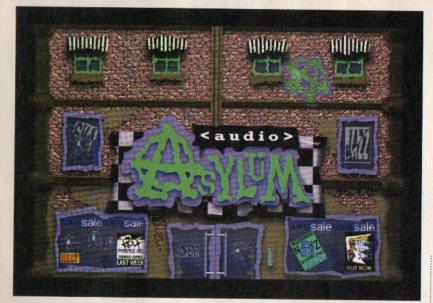




(Right and above right) Check out this wall art.

but funky? Definitely.

(Left) Garish maybe -



((owners writhing about in Ecstasy. Recently they've decided to focus on producing a killer range of Pc-based games, which is why they've been beavering away on Mr Tank, a fast-moving multi-player caterpillar-tread and Combat title with bright, cartoony graphics. And a really big pair of NAKED NUDE TITS.*

(*In true Sun tradition, this last sentence is an utter fabrication.)

The idea behind *Mr Tank* is fairly simple: kill or be killed. The action takes place within a series of chaotic urban environments (complete with loads of scenery to destroy), and is watched by a baying, jeering crowd. As I said, it's primarily a multi-player game. Currently, the game can support up to 16 players at once – without a network. Buh? Wuh?



Well, okay. You're unlikely to want to crowd around one monitor with 15 of your mates, but it's a dramatic indication of the kind of thing that Rebellion's impressive 3D

(Above & left) Hi-res

(Above right) The lovely

talented and 'goodlooking' Rebellion lot.

(Right) Another piece

of 'wall art' Rebellion

(Below) Yet more giant,

(Right) Remember that opening scene in *Blade Runne*?? Thank God you've got a good memory...

lairy, nasty-coloured

has loads of art

school-types.

tank nonsense.

& sketch



engine can muster without breaking into a sweat. While I was in their office, they quickly demonstrated how the game would look running at a 1024x768 resolution, with a 16-way split screen. On a 486 day-100. And it still ran at a frame rate that would shame many other games. Yes, it would shame them into staying indoors in a dark room and beating themselves with a cane, reciting prayers through a wall of sno and tears as they did so.

Brrrrm brrrrrm

The 3D engine is known as JADE. Now, you might assume that this stands for something unbelievably complicated – like *Juxtaposed Anti-aliasing Density Editing-system*, but you'd be wrong. It actually stands for *Jamie and Dan's Engine*, because it was written by two blokes called Jamie and Dan. Aside from the impressive (and fairly ludicrous) 16-screens-on-one capability, it can also do all of the following:

- Light sourcing (on everything in sight)
- · High-resolution texture-mapping



• A colour-mode that makes 256 colour palettes look like 24-bit ones

• Support for over 3000 sprites on screen at once

• Multiple camera riews (which can see right the way back to the horizon)

when parency effects (such as smoke trails)

when the like, featuring action

when the current game

Tate, it'll probably be able to hang-glide and whistle tune to *The Incredible Hulk* too, by the time it's Anyway, you get the point: they're very proud of Decent graphics or not, it'd all fall flat if the wasn't up to scratch. It's early days yet, but since



(Above) Play the game badly and these are the marks you'll get.

(Left) Jason and Chris. Play the game really badly and these guys will pay you a visit.

(Right) Play the game extremely badly, and this thing will roll right over you. Backwards. Twice.

(Left) Cor. just look at

texture-mapping,

all those light-sourcing,

technical stuff thingies.

(Bottom right) What

happens if you cross

Diana? Butch bulimia

Tank Girl with Princess

the action itself seems fairly reminiscent of the fantastic Battle Mode sections of Super Mario Kart, we shouldn't have anything to worry about there. Smashing.

Mr Tank is currently an unsigned game - it's something

publisher will be beating a path to their door in the very

near future, waving a chequebook and promising free cake

of a labour of love for the Rebellion team. No doubt a

Don't say I didn't tell you

and sex and stuff.

Aside from *Mr. Tank*, Rebellion are also currently working on a couple of Top Secret projects for some rather big names. Unfortunately, I'm not allowed to tell you what, who, when, where, or whither. I can't even give you any clues. All I can say is that they're currently developing a couple of games for """, one of which is a fast-moving, svga take on """", and – most exciting of all – they're also working on a technically bang-up-to-date remake of """, which will be officially tied in with the new """ movie. Judging by the quality of the """ models and artwork, not to mention the """ I managed to sneak a look at while I was there, it should all be pretty """ smart to say the least.

So that's Rebellion, then. The people who put the erection in insurrection. So to speak. Z







42 ZONE

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Time Commando available this Summer on PlayStation and PC CD.





MDK Diary

Part 3

are about to erupt as

all hell breaks loose

(Above right) Some

all scared like.

bloke running away

Shiny Entertainment continue working on MDK for Interplay. This month, head honcho Dave Perry talks to PC Zone about the game...



HE NEXT THRILLING EPISODE IN the MDK diaries (Murder He Wrote, or typed to be more accurate). Before I start telling you about all the new stuff for MDK...

Pull up a chair, let's talk about the big picture of making these video game thingies. For those who think it's easy, consider the impact such a project has on wives, girlfriends or boyfriends.

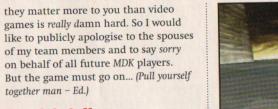
Now I know that most programmers think that Star Trek is the best thing since sliced bread, the reason is, the guys in the show are portrayed as heroes and occasionally they even get to have sex with alien women. What more could a lowly programmer want out of life? Back in reality land, in March we lured some poor unsuspecting girls into our clutches, wined and dined them a couple of times and then uttered the immortal lines, "MDK needs to be finished, thousands of people are depending on us, see you some time after Christmas."

From that day forward, the stress of making a video game, making it cool, making it on time and having to constantly explain to your chick that



(Left) Inside the sleek super spacecraft.

> (Right) A giant bastard with large metal



Gore 'n' stuff

If we get it right MDK will take PC gaming further than you have ever experienced before. Remember all that hype about the morgue eyes on the Resident Evil box? (Er... no - Ed.) Forget that nonsense, I ordered a whole bunch of 'DEATH' tapes from the dark corners of the Internet, just to do research for MDK. These 'DEATH' tapes show people dving in every possible way (including being blown up) and then show you what they look like afterwards. Video nasty central, truly gruesome stuff. That's the wonderful power of the Internet kids. So for all those wimps who were planning to write distressed letters and complain about MDK, don't bother wasting the trees, just piss off. This game is for adults, and we couldn't care less if you object.

Now, for the gamers who think that we have concentrated too much on violence and death, rest assured. We are having a lot of fun making this game, it's rich in gameplay. There are also a lot of gags. Basically, the magic happens whenever you play a serious game and then see something funny, it's like a sucker punch. It's so much more enjoyable. Too much action sucks, too much humour sucks, the balance is what Shiny are concentrating on.



Last week I showed 50 magazine editors MDK running, I now have many "Quake Killer" quotes and they especially loved the boss in the straightjacket riding the exercise bicycle. (Yep, but I bet they were Americans. But do go on - Ed.)

One really cool feature that we have in the game is the fact that the enemies have eyes. ("So you can shoot them out?" I hear you say) Nah... well, yes, but if an enemy is up high on top of a building and is looking your way when you happen to step out of the shadows, then through our Admiral engine you will be able to see where he is, get him in your sights, and take him out. So, the strategy is to scope out an area, keep out of view, find sentries up high and deal with them. That's why we are giving you what we believe to be the most accurate weapon ever seen in a video game after all.

You read it here first, the secret I promised in my last diary is that we are covertly using a team of 'DEMO' coders to do a special level for MDK. 'DEMO' coders are people who write code for fun or for competition. Due to their passion, they can get a PC to really sing. If you want to see some good example demos (by another team)



PC ZONE DIARY



« download the two disks and the patch for Second Reality on http://guru. ami.fi/fc/p-demos.html

Teams like these who pour their heart and soul into their programming are the best type of people to have working on your game, because they are real gamers, pure and simple. They don't want jobs in our industry and have been known to play a game to completion over 500 times taking turns (now that is intense). They just love taking it to the limit.

The final MDK level that they are secretly coding will be kept under wraps, and I'm relying heavily on these guys to pull something very special out of the bag.

Stuff vou don't know about

Another level that I haven't talked about is the Freefall section. Basically, before you start each city, you must jump out of a spacecraft, fall at the speed of a bullet and land on a moving enemy city. While you are doing this, the city radar sweeps around the screen trying to spot you. Your job is just to avoid the radar and arrive in the city undetected (or else you'll have a welcoming committee). If the radar sees you, then a whole bunch of missiles are launched and then you have to avoid all the missiles and the radar. Now here's the tease, when you jump out of the spacecraft, all your really cool supplies and weapons are also thrown out. As you fall, you can collect these items that are falling with you. However, this makes it really hard to avoid the radar, and then the missiles (you get it?). So if you take the easy route and ignore the falling items, they will land all over the city. If you want them, you will have to find them. Basically, for the gamer this is a really nice way to start the level. If



guns blazing. If you cock it up, you'd better make yourself scarce.

The latest thing coded in the game is the bullet view cameras. When you fire a sniper bullet, it flies across the city. Behind it a camera follows and the display on the top of the screen shows its progress (right through the brains of the enemy). The cool part is that you can also pick up homing weapons. If you fire a homing weapon, it too has a camera attached. This means that if an enemy is behind a wall and out of sight, you can watch your bullet chasing him to his death (very satisfying).

Important

The last thing that I want to mention is the projected machine spec. for MDK. Making a game for a high-end machine is always a gamble, but at the same time, we want to push back the boundaries of the new 32-bit console-crushing Pentium PCs. This is our first real effort at developing for the PC and we obviously want our game to look awesome. Having to turn off detail in a game totally sucks, but then doing a game in hi-res allows you to open up whole new avenues of gameplay that just aren't possible in VGA. Now Windows 95 is around and the hardware is finally strong enough to support a detailed, hi-res, real-time 3D action game, we can do what we've always wanted to do, but couldn't because of the hardware limitations.

Other developers may be shouting about the 6ofps they're getting from their new uber-engine, but at the end of the day what I want is hi-res, detailed graphics. Why? I'll tell you. When you're

(Above) No Bod Stewart jokes, please - this chap's well 'ard so just leave it.

(Above left)

spacecraft

looking like

an arse if

Jump out of a

(Below left) Avoid the enemy radar on your way down and pick up as many weapons as possible if you want to survive at ground level.

(Below) Zoom in from miles away to pick off the enemy without him even seeing you. A lot of the game's strategy involves sniping baddies in a certain order so that you can pass through safely. Cool features like this mean that MDK will need a beefy Pentium to handle those gorgeous hi-res graphics.

game in hi-res mode it enables you to see farther into the distance. This enables you to negotiate obstacles better and enjoy playing the game even more.

playing a driving

Big pixels mean

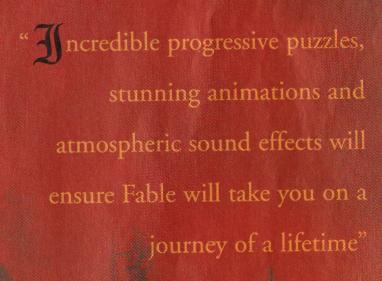
blocky vision, and I don't like having my vision blocked. Hi-res also adds detail, so you can make out facial expressions on characters, for example, and see their eyes move in their heads - and this is important. That's why Sega's Virtua Fighter 3 looks so awesome. The detail in the characters just sucks you in and blows you away. I want to create a similar level of immersion with MDK. I want people to play it and come away saying "Wow!"

The downside to all this is that you'll need a decent Pentium to be able to run our game, but we believe the trade-off is worth it. Most machines nowadays are let down by poor graphics cards that just aren't up to the job. It's just crazy! You buy a P166 and it runs like a 90 because it's got some shitty graphics card stuck in it.

You will need a good Pentium with a fast graphics card (like a Matrox Millennium, for example) to play MDK as it's supposed to be played. This may come as a bit of a shock to some people in Europe, but when you're developing and playing cutting edge software, you've simply gotta have the right tools to do the job. So, if you want to play what we at Shiny believe will be the greatest game ever you'd better start saving for Christmas.

For more information check out: http://www.shiny.com Z





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Charlie Brooker was recently accused of being a Tomb Raider himself. Well, they didn't quite put it like that in court. No, no, they called him a necrophile. He'd been getting away with it for years, until some rotten twat split on him. Anyway, we bailed him out and invited him to have a look at this whizzy new game from Core Design...



(Above) A spot of bother with some git in a lumberjack shirt.

(Left) Girl. Grin. Guns. What a combination.

(Bottom left) This one's for grandma you big bad wolf.

been dying to use that as an opening line for ages. And now I have. Believe it or not, it's appropriate. The censorious asterisks are going to fly like snowflakes in this paragraph. You see, 'f'*king hell' is precisely the phrase that went through my head when I first saw Tomb Raider in action. Why? Because it looks f'*king amazing, that's why. Really f'*king amazing. If this doesn't make your f'*king jaw drop, I'll f'*king well eat my f'*king hat.

Now, before our more uptight readers start writing in to complain ("Dear PC Zone, I must complain in the strongest terms about the language in Charlie Brooker's Tomb Raider preview, Please cancel my f*king subscription. Right now."), allow me to defend myself with the following two points: 1) It's only a f*king word (and a short, everyday one at that), and 2) If Tomb Raider doesn't make you feel like swearing, there's probably something very wrong with you. So lighten up, will ya!

What I'm trying to say is that it looks absolutely gorgeous. Cast your eyes over the screenshots and you'll no doubt hear yourself thinking something along the lines of "hmm... looks just like Alone"

In The Dark to me". And you'd be more or less right. Until, that is,



mu see it in action. Which is when you malise that, unlike the AITD games, Tomb saider is 'properly' three-dimensional. Those detailed backdrops aren't backdrops – they're constructed from fully interactive, 30 objects. In fact, the same has more in common with Mario 64 on the Nintendo than... well, almost any other game you care to mention.

So we meet again, or Jones....

Right then. Explanation time. Tomb Raider concerns the exploits of one Lara Cruz (or Lara Croft - Core don't seem to have decided which yet) - a sort of a female Indiana Jones. Which isn't to say the's got a large chest and a stubbly chin she does have big tits, but the stubble doesn't get a look in. The promotional artwork makes her look remarkably like Jamie Hewlett's Tank Girl - long legs, two guns, and a sneer - while in the game itself she's somewhat reminiscent of Michelle from the Tekken series. According to the press bumph Core hurled at me, they chose to use a female lead because "a male playing the game will be more involved with woman character, in some macho protective little farty way". Hmmm. Anyway, it's probably just as well, because the game looks so involving that playing with Lara Cruz is likely to



be more fun than dealing with a (Top left) Here's how real-life they build up the levels. girlfriend Looks like fun, really. Call that a job? These (mind you, programmers don't so is drinkknow they're born mate ing paint). The plot has something to do with a

thing called 'The Scion', which - in the

finest videogame tradition - has been

split into four parts and scattered around

the world. And it hasn't been scattered

or Kew Gardens and the like. No no no,

that would make a far more sensible,

but infinitely duller game. The pieces

anywhere safe or 'nice', like Center Parcs

(Above) She's a cowboy. On the steel horse she rides. And she's wanted (waaahntehehed). Dead or alive

(Right) Lara comes over all David Wilkie and goes for a swim. Imagine this in motion. Spooge time.

Caught in a trap

...I can't walk out. Be-cause I lurve you too much, bay-bee. One thing you won't love is Tomb Raider's extensive collection of booby traps. Cop a feel of some of these. Like, ouch, man...

I. GREAT BIG BALLS

Which, in true Indiana Jones tradition, roll towards you through narrow corridors. Best to dodge out of the way. Unless, of course, you're harbouring a secret desire to see if any goo flies out when a polygon gets squashed.

COINEC

Foolhardy types who find it necessary to run around like a thing possessed may have the wind taken out of their sails by these giant spikes. Impalation nation!

S. SHOOTERAMA

Whoever built these tombs really was a Grade A bastard.

There's a variety of 'shooty' traps hidden in the walls, à la Quake. From blowdarts to fireballs, the only thing they don't throw at you is custard pies. Because that would be comical. As opposed to deadly and painful.

4. TRAP DOORS

Self-explanatory, really. Just when you least expect it, the ground does a 'Divine Brown' and swallows you.

Another platform game classic, which forces you to time jumps with all the precision of an atomic clock. Look out below.

have ended up in a bunch of dank scary tombs, and it's your job to go in and get them back. Hence the title.

Naturally, the tombs of which I speak are stuffed to bursting with all manner of animals, monsters, and unfriendly humans, not to mention the countless booby traps and puzzles which litter the chambers themselves. And equally naturally, there's an entire arsenal of fearsome weaponry scattered around in there just waiting to be discovered. Pistols and shotguns in excelcis. So far, so Quake, you may be thinking. Well stop right there.

Think "Prince Of Persia"

What are you, blind? Weren't you listening? Look at the screenshots. It's a platform game. A polygon-gasmic 3D



platform game at that. Lara, the main

(over 3000 frames in total, fact-fans)

all manner of things, from running

like its the climactic scene in a John

Woo movie, to 'Bodie and Doyle' style

sprinting, swimming, dangling - she

does the lot. An eerily smooth 'roving

camera' view ensures that wherever

you go, you always get a

Even underwater

excellent). Anyone

who's seen or played

(the swimming

sections look

Mario 64 will

probably be

struck by the similarity

of the

good eyeful of the action.

rolls across the floor. Leaping, walking,

around gunning down all and sundry

character, is both wonderfully animated

and wonderfully gymnastic. She can 'do'





- although Tomb Raider is no hasty rip-off, since it's been in development for over a year. We're talking proper 3D platform fun, in other words. Core have long been 3D specialists - their Thunderhawk being the only good Mega CD game in existence - and for Tomb Raider they've really pulled out all the stops. The engine hasn't been adapted from any previous titles- it's all been written from scratch.

Having seen the Play-Station and PC versions running side by side, I'm happy to report that the PC incarnation is the more impressive of the two. Not only does the frame rate remain astonishingly high throughout the game, there's also a hi-res mode which, for once, actually works (as opposed to turning everything into a flick-book affair). Better yet, Core are also developing a version of the game

which

supports

Direct 3D

(the new

would-be

standard

(Right) Wireframes Before... and after. All the characters are designed in 3D Studio and then imported into Core's very own



(Above) The RSPCA are unlikely to endorse some of Tomb Raider's more violent sections.

(Top left) You're luggage mate!

(Left) Wouldn't want to find yourself inside that, would you? The tomb, I mean

Product details

Developer: Core Design **Publisher:** Eidos Interactive Telephone: 01332 297797

Format: CD-ROM Release date: Mid-November

for 3D accelerator cards) - I only got a quick glimpse at it, but the 640x480 resolution, the 64k colour palette, and the 60 frames per second refresh rate ensured that my jaw hung from the base of my head in a manner not entirely dissimilar to the way an elephant's pendulous bollocks dangle between its fat grey legs. Righteous!

Furthermore, 'tis a big game. There may be 'only' four main pyramids, but each is split into three or more 'zones', each of which is basically an entire level in its own right. Core reckon that even if you knew exactly what to do at each point in the game, and got everything right first time, it'd still take you over three hours to complete. So there. The early stages feature fairly 'realistic' monsters, such as wolves and bears, but naturally, the further you progress, the weirder they get. I'm dying to find out just what a "streaky bacon man" (alluded to in the press bumph) is.

Tomb Raider is scheduled for release next month. As soon as we can, we'll examine it in further detail and type up a report. Which we'll print. And you'll read. And then we'll all be happy. Okay? Z





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Archimedean Dynasty

As Germany's leading games developer dips its toe into the underwater simulation pool, Paul Presley dons his snorkel, flippers and tight-fitting rubber wetsuit to check it out.



LOVE THE GREAT MURKY DEEP. THERE can be no finer feeling than the ripples of warm liquid covering your body, moistening the skin and soothing the soul. A spiritual cleansing that brings you closer to nature and allows you to appreciate the splendours of the world. It's even better when you add Mr Matey Bubble Bath and pretend your rubber ducky is really a naval attack boat, swimming through foamy fjords and in and out of calf-like mountains until it reaches the elongated, sausage-like enemy submarine full of semen. (You mean SEA-men, surely? - Ed.) Er, of course I do. Sea-men. Cough.

Anyway, the point is that my submersible passion has never really been satisfied by the games community. Sure there are plenty of submarine simulators, dozens of the buggers, but they always seem to concentrate on the strategy side of things or the depiction of life inside a thousand-ton metal tube. What I want to see is single-seat fighter ships battling it out with divers, sharks and plankton. MicroProse nearly scored a hit with Subwar 2050 a while back, but since then there's been nothing comparable to make any waves.

Archie who?

So thank Chegwin for the Germans. say I. Blue Byte, the producers of such classic fare as The Settlers and, er. The





Settlers 2, have swam to my rescue with Archimedean Dynasty. (One more 'watery' pun and you're fired - Ed.) Taking the basic framework of Subwar 2050. mixing it with a little bit of the Wing Commander formula and then generally bumping up the presentation (although not by using Wing IV-style FMV. I'm talking about the in-game graphics which I'll come to in a minute), Archimedean Dynasty puts you in the role of a futuristic underwater mercenary a sort of Jacques Cousteau with guns and an attitude - trying to make a living by working for the mining corporations, the navy or by just going rogue and becoming a proper pirate, a-lootin' and a-pillagin', splicing the mainbrace and avasting your hearties. Oh, and by killing everything that poses a threat.

Under the sea...

Despite this being a Blueprint and so by its nature being ever so slightly gushy and fawning, I do have to say that Archimedean Dynasty looks bloody amazing. While the world and his grandad are doing double flips over



(Above) Bizarre-looking ships abound. Some are absolutely huge. Remember those cargo freighters in Elite II? These are even bigger. And armed.

(Below right) Bruce Willis films an action scene from the next

Product details

Developer: Blue Byte **Publisher:** Blue Byte Telephone: 01604 232200 Format: CD-ROM Release date: November

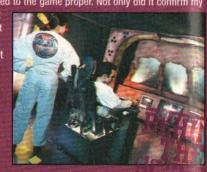
BRender, Blue Byte have developed their very own 3D engine which on the face of things looks to be just as good. The demo I was shown was certainly moving some pretty impressive (and large) texture-mapped polygons about the screen at a fair old rate, even in svGA and under Windows 95. Plus the landscapes were very impressive, almost on a par with the advanced Voxel Space 2 technology that Novalogic have been working on.

Anyway, Archimedean Dynasty is due out in a month or two and we'll see just how well it compares to Bullfrog's forthcoming Creation and all the others then. For now I'll just have to keep playing with the rubber duck. Z

Blue Byte's 'Submarine' **Presentation Studio**

To help promote Archimedean Dynasty to all of us hard-bitten, ther a rather unique presentation studio for the game Resembling the interior of a futuristic submarine - complete with command console and fish swimming around the outside of the elevator that descends into the depths of hell (or so it seeme From there you are ushered onto the main deck, given a strang

worst fears about the Germans (that they're as weird I also got to keep the suit. Smart! Even if I did have a bit of trouble explaining what it was at the customs desk in



Little Johnny was enjoying the sedate pace of his new lift to school, when...



BLUEPRINT

Charlie Brooker once spent an entire year trapped in a claustrophobic environment packed to bursting point with violent aggressors. That was the Doddington Estate in Battersea. This is *Robotron X*. And hey, what's the difference?

Robotron X



ARLY VIDEO GAMES WERE ALMOST completely psychotic. Swift, brutal expeditions into abstract worlds of pain. Worlds in which survival depended solely upon your ability to annihilate endless waves of attackers. Worlds in which a cacophony of laser-fire and electronic carnage rang continually in your ears, while blocky explosions of flowering death spat primary colours in your eye. They may have been almost entirely bloodless, but by God, the violence flowed.

Robotron 2084 being a case in point. In case you don't remember it, allow me to explain. It's the future, right, and mankind is being wiped out by the Robotrons – a seemingly invincible army of circuit-driven sociopaths. Why? Why do you think, dunderhead? Like any self-respecting sci-fi computertechnology oojamaflip, the Robotrons have done a little calculating in their

(Above) Now it's all made up of polygons you can switch to different views and get closer to the action.

(Above right) The original arcade game used two joysticks: one to control direction of movement and one to aim and fire. Williams have got round this by using the four buttons on a gamepad as well as the directional pad.

(Below and right) It may look different, but the gameplay is basically the same. In other words, this game will be fab!



Product details

Publisher: Player One/Williams
Publisher: Williams/GT Interactive
Telephone: 0171-258 3791
Format: CD-ROM

Release date: October

spare time and decided that their creators (ie us) are, to be frank, a bunch of shits who deserve nothing less than immediate extermination. Apparently they'd formed this startling analogy during an afternoon spent in a pub with two MFI area managers, three second-year students, and Ian McShane. Anyway, they're gunning us down like dogs – like dogs, goddammit!

Fear not, help is at hand. In the shape of you (yes, you). Because, for reasons which don't really deserve explanation, only you (yes, you) can save us. Armed with a single laser gun, your task is to enter a succession of battlegrounds (all of them – spookily – the same size as a monitor screen), kill every single Robotron in sight, and simultaneously rescue defenceless humans from the surrounding mayhem. This isn't very easy, since A) There's loads of them, and B) There's only one of you.

Luckily, you're blessed with the ability to run in one direction, while shooting in another. Starting to sound familiar? Yes, that's right. It's just like Smash TV, or Loaded on the PlayStation—a top-down view, claustrophobic, paranoid blast 'em up. Except, since it's older than either of those two games, it's got really basic sound effects, and even more basic graphics.

Aha - or has it?

Not any more it doesn't

Nope, not any more. Because GT are limbering up for the release of *Robotron X*, a '90s update of the classic Williams arcade original. As befits today's modern PC games, it features fast-moving 3D polygons, texture maps, fancy explosions and loads of spangly sound effects. But – and here's the good bit – the gameplay is exactly the same as it was before. Which means simple, effective, cathartic blasting. At the speed of light. Raaa.

Snobby arcade purists should welcome this with loving arms too.

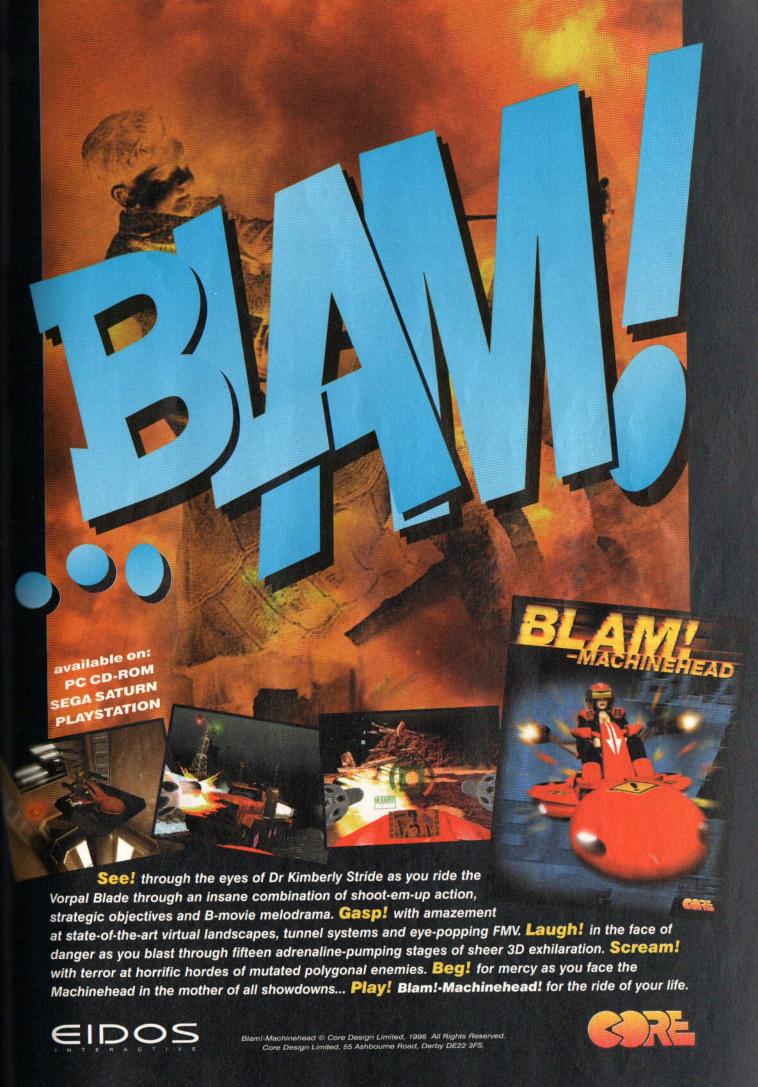


since despite the hi-tech facelift, the developers have – quite incredibly – managed to retain the look and feel of the original. The result is something that is instantly recognisable as being Robotron, only more so. If you see what I mean. All the robots, the humans, and the main character – they're three dimensional polygons. The top-down view is replaced by a roving 'camera' viewpoint, which hovers somewhere above, zooming and tilting as the actio befits. You know the movie Tron? Well, they'd done a Robotron sequence in thait would have looked like this. Okay?

The original arcade game was distinguished by an unusual control system: two joysticks. One for running one for shooting. To emulate this effectively on the PC, you should ideally use a four-button gamepad – the fire buttons simply serve as a second 'joystick' bit, allowing you to experient the joys of multi-directional firepower. This set-up was utilised to great effect the Super Nintendo version of Smash T and I see no reason why it shouldn't work just as well here.

So there you have it: Robotron X. It's just like the original, only different. Hopefully this is the first in a series of old arcade updates. Whatever happens, while this 'retro gaming' vibe is in the air, it's just what the doctor ordered. Keep 'em peeled for a full review. Z





Guts / Garters comedians....

While every other developer is frantically going bonkers trying to compete with iD's latest, newcomers Magic Canvas have turned their backs on the first-person perspective and plumped for a two-player, high-res, all action/adventure style format. Jeremy Wells went to see why.

ESPITE BEING NEW TO GAMES. Magic Canvas have taken a very structured and organised approach to games development. This could be something to do with the fact that they've done a lot of work for the Inland Revenue and have also worked closely with various tourist offices and touch screen technology. As a result, they've got a lot of experience working to a tight brief and this has helped the company approach the ongoing development in a very methodical way. The developers have done their research, they know what gamers want, they know what sells and they know exactly how they're going to do it. It's all very calculated and very well thought through. Publishers Ocean obviously share their commitment, as they've given them the go-ahead to start working on a sequel to Guts 'N' Garters already, and the first game ain't even finished yet.

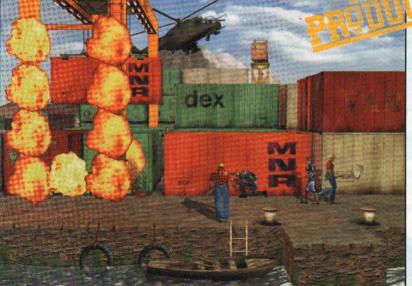
Que Genre?

Guts is a one or two-player adventurecum-shoot 'em up that's packed with puzzle elements, weapons, characters and numerous different backdrops and settings. The player can opt to play as either Guts, a hardened commando type and a ruthless killer, who believes that might is always right, or Garters, a tough and resourceful mercenary babe who specialises in hi-tech computer systems, surveillance and investigation. Both the lead characters and all of the baddies (there are over 100 of them) are very detailed sprites and use motion capture (that was bought in) to help them move more realistically.

Detail, lovely detail

The first thing that strikes you when you see Guts 'N' Garters running is the level of detail throughout. Every character and object features 'intelligent' shadowing, and scales accurately. Each of the background





(Above) The attention to detail in both the characters and the backgrounds is quite awesome

(Left) Recause each scene is made up of numerous layers, characters and vehicles can move in and out of the screen to give a greater sense of depth

Developer: Magic Canvas Publisher: Ocean Telephone: 0161 832 6633 Format: CD-ROM Release date: November

scenes (and there are over 100 of the

were designed using a layered system, bit like onion peel, so that the

characters on screen look like they're

actually running around, behind, on top of and even inside (thanks to a clever cut-away system) the rich graphical environment. Each backdron

also features some rather nice animations: at the dock the sea

shimmers in the sunshine, in the

industrial quarter, smoke puffs from

the chimneys etc. It's also possible for

disintegrate (or explode if their

weapon is powerful enough). In

other words, considering that

it's essentially a free-roaming

immersion is something that

the numerous artists (over

half the team incidentally)

and the programming team

should be very happy with.

The trade-off with so much

detail is that due to memory p

although the team is convinc

the sequel will be side-scrolling

At present, as far as gameplay concerned, this doesn't really

affect how the game is played,

although when the character

you're controlling dashes to the

back of the screen you can't

help feeling a little isolated

from the action. A zoom featu

would be nice, but then you'd

problems and the two-player mode would get very confusin As it stands, the team are currently putting in the missions and working on the puzzles and gameplay. If they can manage to keep the level of detail and depth they've applied to the graphics and storyline in the rest of the game, and sort out a reasonably efficient targeting system, Guts could well be the first in a series of innovative

start to get serious memory

and keenly detailed action/adventure

Product details

games. We'll wait and see. Z

blems Guts is flick-screen only,

environment, the level of

the player to let rip at objects and

buildings and watch them

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FIFA SOCCETS

ES, IT'S COMING UP TO CHRISTMAS, a time of year that's full of so many lovely traditions: wrapping presents under the searching for a sprig of mistletoe tack up on the waistband of your and checking out EA's annual perades of their phenomenally ressful sports titles: there'll be a ak here, an engine re-write there, a new feature somewhere else ally down toward the front where vone can see it). So FIFA 97's here. hat's new? What's not? And why on th am I asking you, en I have the facts

in front of me?

Mon Blending sounds something that goes on in the hen of a coprophiliac. But it isn't. a lot more wholesome, and probably re technical (slightly, anyway). In ar average motion-captured sports pene, people (sometimes famous, metimes nonentities) are filmed many through the motions (if you'll weive the further coprophiliac electones) of the appropriate sport ping-pong balls stuck on the key wats of their body. The ping-pong ball seements are used for the subsequent mations that appear in the game. wyone knows this. veryone also knows that the

requent animations in the game war as separate animations - because how they were recorded. They together about as well as the wrage Punt and Dennis routine: a wer runs along the pitch using his aning' animation. You give him ball. He pauses slightly, his limbs apping into another position, we goes into his 'trapping the ball' mation. You want him to shoot. press the button. He pauses again,

loads his 'shooting' animation, pulls back a beautifully sculpted foot... and the computer, or your opponent, takes the ball off his toe. His arms and legs snap into another running animation, and off you go again. Motion Blending is an attempt to get around this, by smoothing off the bits between the various animations, so that the transition

is less noticeable,

the game more fluid

less ludicrous

in slow-

motion

Christmas is coming, and the kids are getting fat. Largely because they

know - he's put on 30 pounds himself.

spend all their time indoors playing simulations of sport, instead of

going out and doing the real thing. Patrick McCarthy should

and the action detail. Let's hope it (Below) To make sure

(Right) Check out

moves faster than

the players move in

the right way, EA Sports

motion-captured David

Ginola. They'll also

be using him and Lee Dixon in their

new beat 'em up

Tony Adams.

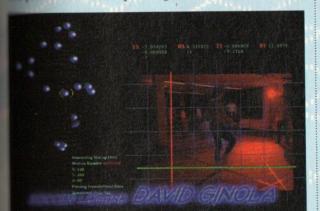
all that glorious



On top of this, the new 3D Plus feature allows greater smoothing of the player figures, so they look more like they have proper muscles, and less like they've been put together from a Meccano set.

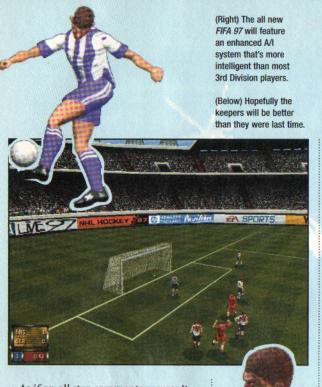
An all-star line-up

EA's sports titles, always beautifully put together, get more like a television show with each release. Where previous versions of FIFA had John Motson providing the commentary, FIFA 97 has pushed the boat out on the overpaid expert front. Mottie's been joined by the housewife's favourite moustachioed smoothie, the grey-haired Magnum P.I. himself, Des Lynam. And they've poached Andy Gray from Striker - which... er, is a bit like going all out for Jason Lee. However, EA seem confident that, with a better script, he'll be more polished than he was in the other sorry effort. Time will tell.





BLUEPRINT



As if an all-star commentary wasn't enough, they've also got the very lovely David Ginola in to perform all the movements for the motion capturing. So don't be surprised if players keep stopping to see to their hair and only change their underwear once a week.

Managerial Action

One of the more irritating things about the last version of FIFA was that the club sides weren't that well-researched. Players were in the wrong positions, and you had to move them about. But any changes you made would be ignored when you started the next game, and you had to go through it all again every time: Pain In The Arseville. This time, your changes within the side will not only be saved, but any changes you make to the squad will be too.

You can swap players from different teams - or just take them for yourself without trading - setting your own little superteam. How d'you fancy getting George Weah, Ronaldo, Matthias Sammer and Youri Djorkaeff for your sorry-ass nohopers? For nothing? Strictly speaking this isn't management - it's grand larceny. But you can do it. And you'll be able to set up a database for every saved





eague you're playing, so that other people can set up their own superteams and get silly as well. Other enhancements on the managerial side include the option to fine-tune your team's formations, and on the gameplay front there's a new indoor option, for 3, 5, and 7-a-side action.

Difficulty levels

You may well need to do it, too, because they've made the game a lot more

difficult. Apparently people complained that the last one was too easy if you really practiced. They may have a point



Below) The latest

incarnation will feature

options and a 20-player

etwork option. Handy.

all the usual viewing

- someone not a million miles away from where I'm sitting at the moment won the League with Chelsea Chelsea! This is the Chelsea in the days before Ravishing Ruud and Luscious Luca, too. Another chap claimed that he could score every tin from the kick off within around eight seconds with Arsenal (!?) The word is that in the new version, the computer is "almost impossible to beat." Bad news for dilettantes, who just want a casual game now and then, of course, and can't be bothered to take the touch-typing course necessary to master the arcane skills and what amount to special moves of the game But good news for obsessives and experts, who, I suppose, are more likely to keep on buying these new versions.

Big numbers theory

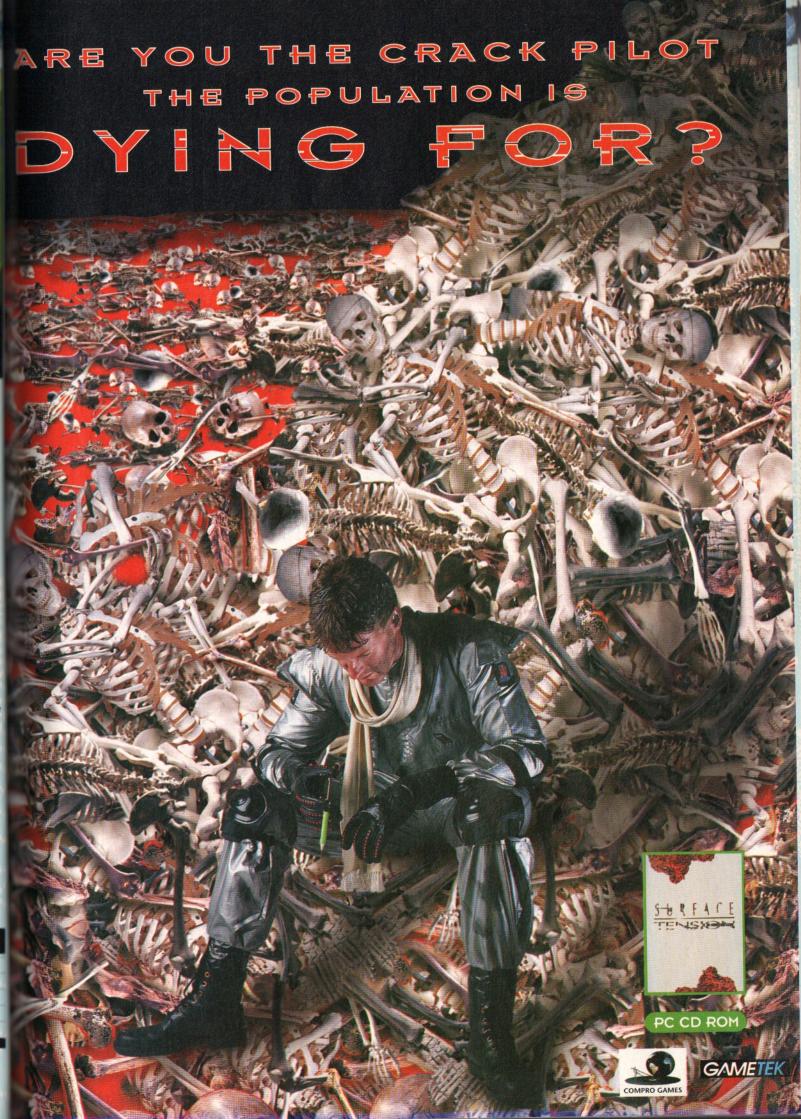
The other new feature that may ensure that this year's model does extremely well is the network option. We're not talking here about measly old four, or even eight-player, action. We're talking about 20 players. That's one for every outfield player, in case your maths is a bit weak, and it's been promised before by other games, but this time it's a reality. Which means you'll all have to stand against the wall in the office and be 'picked' by two captains, and possibly suffer the childhood humiliation of being the last one left all over again. Still, cheer up - at least they can't put you in goal. Z

Product details

Developer: EA Sports Canada **Publisher:** Electronic Arts Telephone: 01753 549442

Format: CD-ROM

Release date: November 1996



Former marriage guidance counsellor to Charles and Di, **Bosnian UN peace-keeper and** Ambassador to Iraq, Paul Mallinson seems the perfect candidate for a spot of intergalactic diplomacy.



RELİGİOUSLY

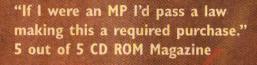


STUNNING FEATURES INCLUDE:

+ State-of-the-art visuals: Over 70 real time 3D environments with rich texture maps create a unique atmosphere.



- Imaginative puzzles: complex and sophisticated puzzles are integrated into the environment and require imagination and skill to solve.
- + Stunning high resolution 640×480 SVGA graphics for head up display.
- + Realistic character dialogue: each character has its own history and personality
- + Challenging combat, an important component of the game, the player is advised to fight tactically to avoid being injured and wasting precious ammunition.
- + Crystal clear digitised sound effects: superbly realistic audio effects and a variety of atmospheric music tracks enhance the game experience.





"Stunning Super VGA graphics tagged onto one of the best plots of the year make Azrael's Tear one of the most eagerly awaited RPGs for a while." - PC Power

Azrael's Tear looks like a winner, trust me." - PC Review

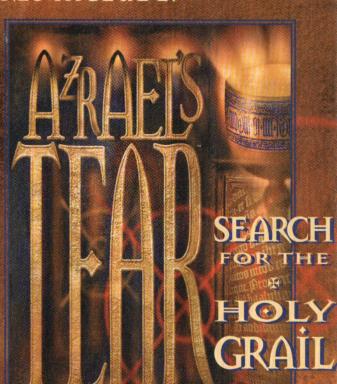
Azrael's Tear is a yardstick title, a game against which other adventures should be measured." - 90% PC Zone

PRIORITY HOUSE, CHARLES AVENUE, MALTINGS PARK, BURGESS HILL, WEST SUSSEX, RHIS 9TO UK WEBSITE: http://www.mindscapeuk.com



Windows 95 COMPATIBLE VERSION coming soon





"It's pretty damned impressive

Fragile Allegiance



IKE A PORN STAR DRAINED OF ALL energy after a particularly demanding 'take', the planet we live on and in is being sucked by by over-mining and day-to-day stage. Our planetary resources are of going to last for ever are they? Not cording to Fragile Allegiance, or other source management-based games of a milar ilk. Mineral deposits, essential industrial manufacturing of all ands will have to be sought elsewhere. apost, Ascendancy, Deadlock and Fragile legiance's predecessor on

Me Amiga, K240, II had the player Illing holes on ocure, remote

mets in the vain ope of finding the necessary materials colonise them. What we have, with sese futuristic resource management mes, is a fair estimation of what will

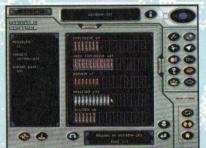


eventually happen if we're not careful with the resources we currently have at our disposal.

We're alright jack

But, ultimately, no one really gives a toss because none of us are going to be around when the shit hits the wall behind the fan (because the fan's been recycled for its metal), and, for now, I'm happy to explore new worlds to suck them

dry too. Like many of its contemporaries, Fragile Allegiance relies heavily on a seemingly complex system of menus, maps and statistic screens. It's what this genre's all about; exploration, mining, manufacture, research, defence, and, if you're lucky, a sprinkling of mass destruction. Success, as always, is directly related to the efficiency at





(Left) Building an offworld space station is a priority if you're looking to establish trading routes with others.

(Above) But first you'll have to buy the plans from the big boys at Tetra Corp, the huge company backing your mining venture.

(Bottom centre) After collating an impressive number of weapons. I decide to launch them at the weakest race of aliens. Fair?

which your colony operates, which affects the amount of money you make. Naturally Fragile Allegiance has all of the above, but what exactly can we expect from the final version? What has Gremlin's game got that all the others haven't?

Out with a bang

For starters, the presentation of the game is already looking top notch. Rather than having to contend with a huge amount of pop-up windows, a single display window, with smart metallic sliding panels is the preferred method of navigation. Very Terminator 2, and classy with it.

without your help. The preview version we were shown was quite literally 'nails'. The Al had been cranked up to 'hellish', with the alien rivals just itching for some action.





From the moment the landing craft touches the surface of the first asteroid, it's a race against time to establish a stable 'core' operation, before branching out to other planets, or even going on the offensive with the six other alien civilisations that have been incorporated to make things trickier. Each has its own characteristics and ambitions some extending an arm of friendship (and, possibly, a shot at partnership) while others want nothing but to rape and pillage your

colony

for their

own needs. Dealing with antagonists will be fun as there are numerous weapons to try out on them. Nukes, biological weapons (highly illegal, but handy if you intend to wipe out all life on a planet but prefer to leave the buildings intact) and an innovative little doobrie called a Stasis Bomb which is said to be useful if used on your own colony. What it does you see, is freeze time within a set range, holding people, ships and even dust, in temporary stasis until the effect times out. Use it on





yourself if you're under attack and it also freezes attacking enemy forces, allowing precious time for a reinforcements call.

Advanced AI will provoke a different reaction from the aliens every time you play; difficulty levels will be user-definable, allowing you to change alien aggressiveness, frequency of random events, length of the player's contract and number of asteroids to chip away at etc (or so Gremlin hope). Good news for newcomers to the genre.

Off yer tits

agents to sabotage

the opposition. Ooh,

I love it when the

fighting gets dirty.

(Above right) Caught

in a crossfire. This

colony isn't very

big and will soon

be kneeling in

(Below) Asteroid

engines are great

for a spot of zero

gravity joy-riding.

Power steering,

electric windows

and bottomless

ashtray optional.

my presence.

To make it even more interesting there will be a number of 'underworld' features that are definitely guaranteed to liven things up a bit. Black market trading of illegal substances, including recreational and performance-enhancing drugs is risqué, but realistic (sounds

not unlike Outland to me). The odd 'house of entertainment' boosts colonist's morale (well, wouldn't it boost yours?) which will be important if overall performance is to stay high.

It's a tricky business keeping all of the people happy all of the time, especially when you consider how deep this kind of game can become. Rather thoughtfully, Gremlin's developers are building into the game Artificial Intelligence routines that manage parts of your colony for you, freeing up time for more important matters, such as moon golf and astro tennis... erm, I mean mining and research.

For those of you who like nothing better than humiliating your friends

Product details

Developer: Gremlin Interactive
Publisher: Gremlin Interactive

Telephone: 01142 753 423

Format: CD-ROM

Release date: November





and colleagues with your gaming skills, a smorgasbord of network and link-up options are to be included. Up to eight players, each representing a different mining company, will get the chance to play against/with each other, with an internal e-mail system for general abuse and communication.

So it sounds like we're going to be in for an extremely absorbing and entertaining time. Fragile Allegiance is not far off finished – only a few sound effects have yet to be incorporated, and the AI is being pruned into shape as we speak. Next month we'll be reviewing it in full, so get the weights out and get into training – this could be a heavy one. 2

Grinning Evil Death

Of course, interplanetary destruction plays a major part in *Fragile Allegiance* which, if you're prone to bed-wetting or daisy-picking, may not be your cup of tea. Whether a collection of these goodies will act as a deterrent to other players remains to be seen. But then again, what's the point of spending load of money on these things if you're not prepared to use them?



This weapon rains ice creams down on the unsuspecting aliens. Available in a variety of different flavours. Maybe.



The ultimate means to an end Make sure your colonists stand well back once the blue touch paper is lit. Probably.



Makes time stand still. Similar in effect to a Wet Wet Wet gig, except without the makeup. I think.



Dropping this baby causes the enemy to go blind in one eye and renders them sterile. So a man down the pub told me.



Opposite of the above number, restores sight (in one eye only and turns the colonists into sexual athletes. Apparently.



Patrick McCarthy thought Comanche 3 was a courtroom RPG based upon the wrongful imprisonment of a party of Native Americans during the mid-19th century. It's just another of those hilarious misunderstandings that make life in our office like a non-stop sitcom.

Gomanche 3

Product details

Developer: Novalogic **Publisher:** Novalogic Telephone: 0171-405 1777

Format: CD-ROM

Release date: December

HEN IT COMES TO HELICOPTER sims, there are two types of punter. On the one hand there are the people who like full-on simulations, which offer operating conditions as close as it's possible to get to reality on a PC. There they sit, in their vibrating swivel chairs, wearing their special G-Force Emulator Vests over their RAF-issue sweaters, wiggling five 25-button joysticks, three weapons-control systems and nine different foot pedals, with a realistic winch bolted to the radiator and their specially-installed sliding bedroom door wide open. They don't care that the game they're playing looks like it was designed for the Game And Watch, because the flight model is so accurate that ordinary people can't even get the thing off the ground. They don't call helicopters 'choppers', because that's too common - everyone, even people who can't fly the real thing, calls them

(Below) "Okay, then ... race you to the top of

pilots like to attach

pointy sticks to

in the sand.

(Below right) Kevin wasn't sure whether they'd landed with the wheels up, or whether it was just perspective. that. These people have their own, more exclusive private slang names for them. Unfortunately, I can't tell you what they are. I can't remember. I saw them written down once, but I've got a memory,like a lap-dancer's underwear. Anyway, these sort of people tend to gravitate towards games like Hind.

Then there are the other sort, who enjoy helicopter sims for some perverse reason of their own - perhaps they like looking through bedroom windows, or something. Or maybe they just enjoy flying about more slowly than they can in a plane, and don't want all that bother with differentials and stuff. All I Flambéd Flyboy Bisque.

These sort of people like games like Comanche, or its follow-up, Comanche

know is that if you gave them a helicopter sim with a decent flight model they'd a) struggle to get off the ground b) if they did get off the ground, they wouldn't be able to travel forwards; an c) if they did manage to travel forward they'd also travel downwards so fast their testicles would be peeping out th neck of their flying suit. Seconds later, they'd be little more than one of the minor contents of an interesting new soup: Ena Baxter's Twisted Metal and

Vs Werewolf. They want fast action and



afterwards. (Unless you live in Gstaad, I suppose — in which case, d'you fancy a bit of house-swapping?) Look at those gorgeous contours, that lustrous plant-life. It almost seems a shame to fly over it and turn it into a twisted, smoking mess with

the entire

version, however many years ago at was, still looks pretty damned good May Purists' flight sims don't look but good even now. And as for this wion... I know it's probably one of most over-used phrases in the wory of preview-writing, the graphics really are perb. No, really. We mean it this time. The big difference is that with this lease, for the first time, you can Boose a realistic flight difficulty string. You can have your cake and it. (Except that phrase doesn't make wase.) If you want an easy time of it, old-fashioned, arcade Comanche mle, you can. But if you want to don RAF sweater and struggle along are moving, for goodness' sake. You the patches for your elbows can even see that they're wearing and shoulders: off you go. goggles and helmets, that one of

old anyone ever tell you you're rather attractive?

tement. They want ease of control.

ad equally importantly, they want a

etch for an electronic British Rail

wenger Information Board.

lurk! Wha-?

me that doesn't look like a preliminary

ere was no danger of Comanche ever

ing mistaken for one of the purists'

wht sims. Flying it was a simple up,

wn, left and right affair. And even the

game is powered by Voxel Space 2, Merrain imaging system which you a landscape so pretty that almost don't want to go home



them had chickenpox as a child and

and suffers from unsightly nasal hair.

sits at the back doing nothing, picks

his nose and wipes it under his seat,

that the other one needs a shave

Every now and then the one who

(Above) "Isn't this nice," said Timmy, "we look like a great big buzzy fly."

(Above left) Helicopter toilets flush straight onto the ground.

and the one in front turns round to tell him off. You see we're talking detailed, here.

So whaddya got?

Since this is the third version of the game, you'll know all that stuff by now about how the Comanche is supposed to be the world's most "survivable" combat helicopter. Let's face it, if Americans are going to fly

it, it needs to be. And if you're going to fly it, who cares? That's what saved games are for. As for the differences between this and previous versions,

there's the obvious point that this version is going to look even more fabbo than its predecessors. There's the dificulty settings and the missions - all 30 of them. There will be day missions in beautifullyappointed landscapes; attractive weather conditions; and night missions, in which everything will go green. There'll be translucent smoke billowing from the back of the allied trucks you've taken out in true American style. And thanks to the new Dolby Surround sound effects, there'll be more talking going on around you than when you accidentally end up as the only male in a girls' night out. And you'll probably have about as much chance of understanding it. Look out for a full review next issue. Z

(Above) Unable to stand the tension any longer. munitions factory. both crew members The detail on the helicopter itself nodded off. also has to be seen to be believed. The lighting conditions reflect off the surfaces of the windscreens (or whatever helicopters have) when the light's straight on them, and let you see right through the cabin when it isn't. Zoom right in close and you can see the heads of the two blokes flying the thing. You'll see that they're looking around - their heads

> (Below) Lots of full-frontal shots of nude helicopters.



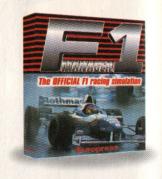






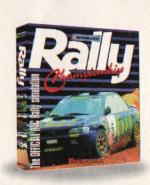
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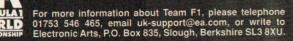
Mathematician Director Resource Manager Accident Investigator Product Development Social Worker Racing Commentator

Do you qualify?









then he first saw the title of this game, Paul Mallinson thought he'd men given directions to a house owned by the mystical Smurf family. such to his chagrin, this turned out not to be the case.

15/42 Abrams



roduct details

er: Charybdis Enterprises er: Interactive Magic

ne: 01344 409 399 t CD-ROM

a date: November

of primordial fun.

PLIEVE IT OR NOT, BUT I'VE actually driven a real tank. A Russian T-34 (I think) on a test track with a bunch of other

up journalists. It gave me a taste what it must've been like to pilot one marvellous machines in the of combat. Initially it was pretty way tearing down an undulating primarily because I couldn't where the hell I was going and wing the mutha was no easy task. wentually I got the hang of it and woon tearing up the turf like a possessed. I have to say it was

(Above) Whether there will be any ground forces to mow down with this thing is, as vet, undecided.

(Above right) Bosnia, Ukraine or Iran? Or maybe training

(Left) Big tank brewing up! Chances

of survival? Zero.

(Right) Here's an

unfinished tank. It's a

good job they're not

like this in the game, otherwise you'd fall

through the thing.

battle in this thing?". The answer to that question was; they don't have to anymore. These days tank technology has advanced to the point where the driver doesn't have to squint out of a

The M1 Abrams series, with its sophisticated integrated navigation and targeting systems, astounding 'fightability' and high level of armour protection brought tank warfare into the 21st Century when first introduced

way back in 1979.

Interactive Magic's newbie M1A2 Abrams (subtitled 'America's Main Battle Tank', but let's forget that because it's a crap subtitle) aims to simulate everything the real tank can do in real life, which means wholesale destruction on a large scale, all 'wholesale-destructionon-a-large-scale' fans.

Now you can actually see

"how the hell could anyone fight a

All I could think of sat in the T-34 was,

poxy hatch at the front of the vehicle.

where you're going

Spread over a number of combat theatres (Bosnia, the Balkans, the Persian Gulf and Ukraine/Russia), each with its own unique terrain, enemy forces and military situation, M1A2 Abrams is beginning to take shape in a polygonal form, with the usual variety

of views from within the tank itself and an astounding array of 'digital battlefield' map displays.

So far, gameplay is quite basic, but the final version aims to incorporate complex campaign scenarios complete with vehicles, artillery and helicopter support, which sounds pretty cool.

Hopefully, M1A2 Abrams, when finished, will provide tank fans with a claustrophobic, exciting and atmospheric experience. All will be revealed in a full review next issue. Z

I'm a warrior!

Some of you on-line-sters out there may have spent many an hour fighting through the skies of Air Warrior (a multi-player combat sim that's been around since 1987), in the vain hope of racking up a few kills which was notoriously difficult to achieve (life expectancy of novice players being akin to that of a Mayfly).

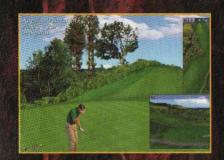
The follow-up, Air Warrior II, also from Interactive Magic, is a welcome solution to those 'I'm shit at Air Warrior' blues by being an outstandingly enhanced, single-player version of the on-line game, allowing at least some practice before the eventuality of death. Twenty-five historic aircraft are touted, as well as over one hundred missions spanning three separate eras (WWI, WWII and the Korean War). I-Magic claims that the Al and flight models will wow any self-respecting propellerhead into paroxysms of ecstasy, but, for us, the final verdict will remain open until we get our hands on the finished thing, which should also appear in our next issue.



Legends in Sports '97

Links, the greatest Golf simulation ever produced for the home computer, teams up with the legendary Arnold Palmer at his home course, Latrobe Country Club, to bring you Links LS - Legends In Sport. Links LS is the latest benchmark Golf simulation for your PC by which all others will continue to be judged.







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PC GUIDE : BEST BUY AWARD 6/6

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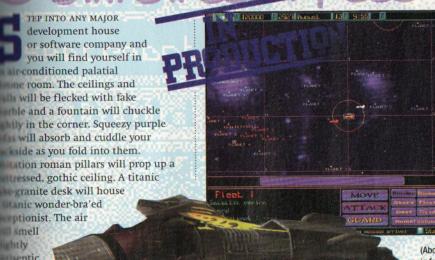
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Imperium Galactica

And so to Hungary, where the software companies are refreshingly down to earth and the women are 'mondo schwing'. David McCandless visits GT Interactive's latest crew -Digital Reality - to nod meaningfully at a forthcoming space 'em up -Imperium Galactica.



annequins in and ties will parade past, talking product' and 'form factor'. destep to the middle of Eastern rope, to Budapest in Hungary, and Il find a parallel dimension. The ces of Digital Reality are on the th floor of a tenement block. mearest thing to a fountain is the antly limescaled sink. The chairs widn't look out of place at a school embly. The ceiling is low and cracked. furnishings are post-communist

The walls are dotted with

schedules, notes, and a colour photocopy for Reunion, their previous game. Here, seven young programmers and graphic artists, distinctly un-goatee, have been beavering away for 18 months on their latest game. In an age of flashy marketing and fake-granite reception desks, here is an oasis, which smacks of the 'olden days', when talented home grown



(Above) The StarMap is for plotting the course of your Empire through the stars.

(Above right) Battles are relayed to you in 2D and 3D chunks.

(Left) The bridge

of your ship - the

epi-centre, the hub.

(Below) Gabor Feher -

Digital Reality's main

man, and thoroughly

(Below right) The

species - man - conquering the speed of light and venturing daintily into the ether. The void. The great, black unknown. In essence, space. Earth has become a rather crammed veal truck, forcing explorers, colonists, and new age wayfarers to explore the cosmos, appropriating new worlds and building all manner of swanky architecture. As we all know, with exploration comes contact with other species - some nice, some not. To police the border and protect colonies, the Earth Empire has created a military force of some size, made up of multiple fleets, each with multiple cruisers, scouts and warships. You, a lowly captain at the start of the story, command one of the lesser fleets and, like all powermad crazies, it is

programmers slaved away at their

Star Control II, and Blade Runner.

The future

mum's house, creating labours of love

while milk went off around them. The

labour of love here is Imperium Galactica

& Conquer, Sim City, Wing Commander IV,

Like all good sci-fi yarns, the Imperium

Galactica future has that most special of

- an extraordinary merging of Command

your quest to build an entire empire. The game is split roughly into three sub-games with you at the centre. The pivotal location is your ship. Here, in various rooms, you receive and filter e-mail, consult your star charts, and





BLUEPRINT



(Left) More scary

(Right) Develop your planetary systems with Geiger-esque buildings.

« arrange and plan your ships for combat. Orders from your superiors come through constantly, as do requests for help (from fraught colonists or ambushed fleets) and personal video messages from your wife. In the R&D facility, you can set about converting your wealth and resources into quality weaponry and spaceships - keeping your eye on taxes and setting up trades with one of the 100 planets specialising in different technologies. To cap it all off, there's also a bar location in the bowels of your vessel, where you can interact with your crew and gain vital gossip from visiting dignitaries.

While you're hob-nobbing with the plot, two other sub-games demand your attention. One is the SimCity-esque colony management where you build and populate the fledgling planets of your Empire. Careful attention needs to be paid to your choice of infrastructure. 42 buildings can be constructed, ranging from police stations and solar plants to bars and sports stadiums. As your population and city grows it can be tuned to provide essential resources and



"Six beers please."!

Ten fantastic facts about Hungary

- Budapest is actually two cities. One called Buda, the other Pest!
- The word 'sar' in Hungarian means 'shit'!
- Rather amusingly, to say hello in Hungary, you say (phonetically) "seeya"!
- The most important phrase to learn for budding Budapest goers is (phonetically): "Say-rat nyag hot shirt" which means
- Hungarian women are very 'schwing' but very stroppy!
- Hotel accommodation, food, and drink is very cheap, but stuff like records and sporty footwear is very expensive
- It is considered a great insult to chink your beer glasses in a toast. A hundred years ago, a foreign army ransacked Budapest and while the Hungarian generals dangled from the rafters above, the victors clinked ale glasses in celebration!
- Flights to Budapest on British Airways are over the one and half hour watershed. This means the stewardess are obliged to give you as much alcohol as you can imbibe for the entire journey!
- 'Blowfloss' is another rude word. Hungarians are really comedians (see pic below).



gag breaks both



weaponry for your fleet. Careful though, over-taxation or a laissez-faire attitude can leave your metropolis open to unrest - either from revolt or from an enemy empire lancing your life's work with ground troops. Only a Command & Conquer-style troops sim will save you at this point, although you can call in air support from your fleet.

Super space combat

Should your ships be intercepted, then a space combat sim kicks in. Similar in point and click approach to the ground battles, you commandeer individual ships in your armada, co-ordinating laser fire, kamikazee scouts, and evasive action in real-time. If you've stocked up on lasers, bombs, mines, and hyperdrives, you should slice through enemy battalions like a hot knife through butter. If not, then you must rely on your strategic skill and reflexes to save you.

The first few missions are tightly scripted to draw you into the action and familiarise you with the controls

Product details

Developer: Digital Reality **Publisher: GT Interactive**

Release date: December

searching for it too...

Telephone: 0171-258-3791

e-mail: http://sales@gtinteractive.com

Format: CD-ROM

and the multi-tasking demands of the gameplay. From mission three to mission twenty-two, the plot becomes totally non-linear, leaving you kneedeep in the 'sar' (look it up in your phrase book or our handy Hungarian guide below)). You ascend the ranks, gain bigger and better warships. Your empire grows. But behind the political shenanigans, battles, and the pneumatic rising and falling of worlds, there is a backbone plot - a quest for an all-powerful weapon, hidden somewhere in the galaxy. A steady stream of clues will lead you to its location, but others may be

Imperium Galactica still has a bit of work to be done. The interface is likely to be changed. A few subtle changes to the combat and AI are also on the cards. All in all, its a heady cocktail of sci-fi, storyline, trading, combat, and Sim game, plus its healthy 'backroom' development ethos, means that this may well be one sizeable Chrimble hit

Cut-scenes

Elegant 3D rendered cut-scenes may not maketh the man, but they surely maketh the man a damn sight prettier. Call them what you want - window-dressing, candy floss, distracting dullness, CD-ROM fodder, atmospheric scene setting - cut-scenes, in their rotating 3D-Studio rendered glory, are here to stay.

The graphics artistes chez Digital Reality have probably not been saturated with sophis images from Blade Runner, Star Wars, Return Of The Jedi, Babylon Five as we have in the West. Yet somehow their works pays homage, both visually and cinematically, to that splendid sci-fi pedigree. Every game and its barber does cut-scenes these days but, it must be said, that Digital Reality's panoramic cities, spinning gun installations, phallic spaceships, and planetary systems are all considerably well directed, exceptionally well-lit and modelled, and very, very, very atmospheric.







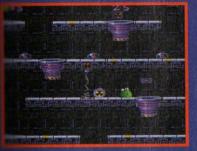


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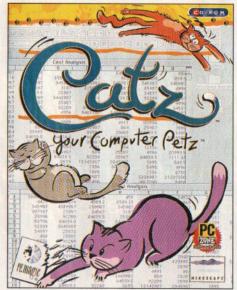
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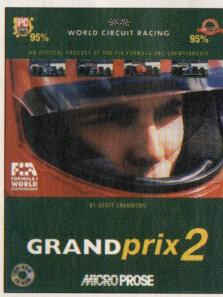
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War Wind

Like getting his greasy hands on a beta of War Wind, a kind of next gen Warcraft clone with knobs on. Bastard.



veloper: SSI ublisher: Mindscape dephone: 01444 246 333 eb: http://www.ssionline.com ormat: CD-ROM

se date: October

WO GAMES STAND HEAD AND shoulders above the rest as far as real-time strategy games go -Command and Conquer and Mircraft 2. The bad news is that every altware developer under the sun, and beir dogs, maiden aunts and attached wrasites, are going to try and imitate hem in some way. The good news is hat we're all going to have lots of moice and even better games like Z and 7th Level's similar epic real-timer alled Dominion. Well, supposedly. One that's really caught the Zone am's eve of late is SSI's nearly-off-thewing-board attempt called War Wind. he fact that it looks, feel and smells at like Warcraft is going to be good or ad, depending on your feelings about Mircraft, but despite the obvious milarity in terms of the overhead www, the cartoon style fantasy-sci-fi andscape and the various grunts and wans that pass for sound effects,

there's more artificial intelligence built into each unit. Units will

move around obstacles and don't tend to get stuck. Send a worker over to some woods or crystal deposits and he'll start doing something useful like turning them into resources. Send a fighter for a stroll near some enemy units and he'll fire at them with ranged weapons or attack in hand-to-hand combat, whichever is best.

Better still is the introduction of formation movement. Multiple units can be selected and moved or sent to attack just like other similar games, but if you have certain advanced units present they can act as anchor units. You organise a group into a particular formation, select an anchor man (with a shift-right click), give it a destination and have it move off and assemble back into the right formation when the units reach their destination. Unfortunately, they won't move in that formation unless they all happen to have the same movement rate, but what the hell. It's cool.

Units can be transported in trucks, barges and aircraft type thingies (which are structures rather than units) and

(Above) The Shama'Li

(Left & right) Th

stolid Obblinox

once served as

the strength and

muscle of the

Tha'Room

I missed the deadline. Ordinary workers can be upgraded to better workers or turned into scouts or fighters. What's particularly neat is that they can also be

they can be upgraded with up to five

bionic add-ons, like speed, strength, vision, resilience and another one. Look it's not that important, right? If I

play it, and I'll probably miss my

load up the game again I'll just have to

deadline. Okay, so it's stealth - and yes,

downgraded and then upgraded again if you're short of a

(Right) An early Shama'Li sketch

(Below) The many-eyed





WOOLWORTHS



BLUEPRINT



particular type. There are three levels for each unit type, so advanced workers, for example, will build much more quickly. Once you've got a laboratory you can also heal units that have incurred battle damage so there are plenty of strategic choices around.

Resources and building are handled very much à la Warcraft except there's only one resource type, although you can also find treasure and crystals and recycle something tastefully called bioslag. No, it's not something you find in a nightclub. Bioslag is what you get when you waste a mech unit, for example. To get some units you have to build certain structures and each unit has to have a certain amount of dormitory space. To upgrade units you must already have a certain number of other units in play, which can get over-complicated.

Hall of heroes

In War Wind you can build two types of wall, one of which causes damage to anyone attacking it, as well as two types of road that accelerates movement.

The main difference between War Wind and its predecessor is that additional manpower isn't created out of thin air; instead you create a pub-like building in which they appear at random and can be hired there and then, ignored or turned away. In this way you get workers, mercenaries or the occasional heroic unit. Heroes are a little like their counterparts in Fantasy General with enhanced capabilities and powers. Jynni the Creeper's definitely going to be my favourite – apparently she has an organic dart launcher. Lucky





(Left) Are you lookin' at me? I said: are you lookin' at me?!

(Above) You are here. I think. Or somewhere close anyway.

(Above right) Lizard-like warriors; the Obblinox.

girl – beats a dildo any day. There is also a hall of heroes that lets you transfer favourite units from scenario to scenario in single-player mode.

Perhaps the biggest all-round improvement is that there are four races to choose from. For what it's worth, and for those who bother reading game plots, the game is set on Yavaun. Civil war is breaking out between the historical rulers, the Tha'Roon, a hard-fighting, hard-drinking lot called the Obblinox, some vegetable-like things called the



Obviously the four races aren't anything like as highly developed as humans because the planet Yavaun still seems to have a wide variety of wildlife

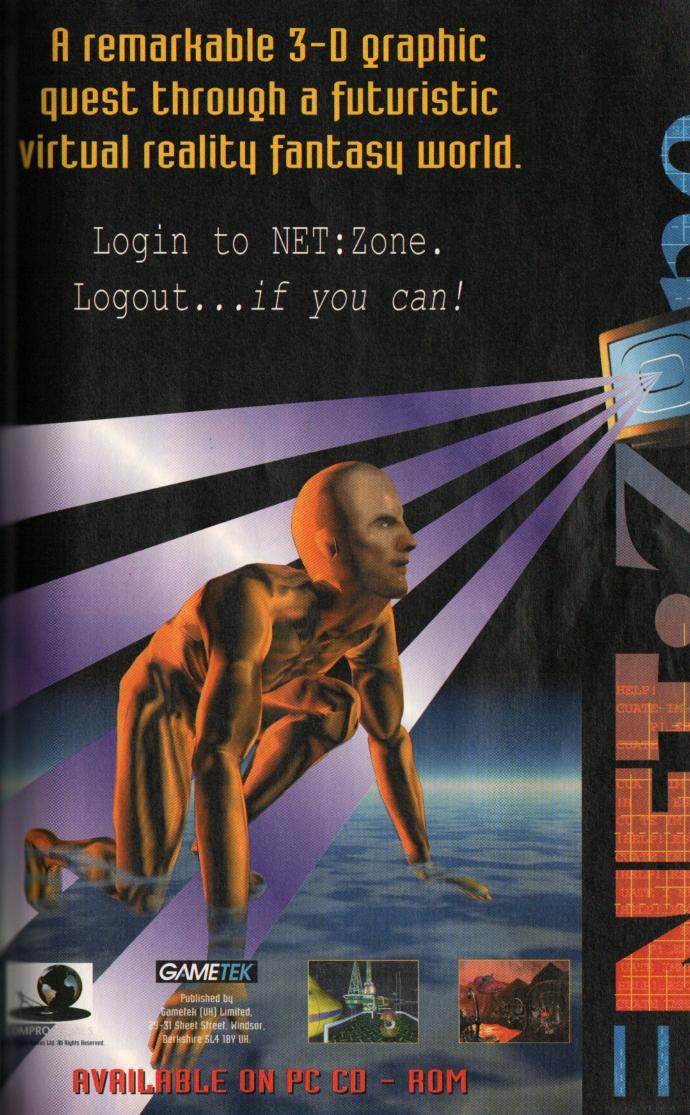


from dinge vermin to boncas (big whit rhino-like thingies). Sometimes you'll wish they'd become extinct as some of the randomly appearing critters take quite a bit of killing.

The point of all this is that each race has very different characteristics. Although there are equivalent units, they have different combat and defensive capabilities, sometimes spells, sometimes psychic abilities and sometimes ranged weapons. Or not, as the case may be. Each race requires a different strategy, making the game four times as interesting for lone players (once they know everything the various characters can actually do and offering some interesting possibilities for network play.

For solo play, there will be seven campaign scenarios for each race as well as a good sprinkling (in other words, I've no idea how many) one-off scenarios. The mandatory scenario editor will also be included. War Wind will, of course, have network and head to-head play capabilities but nothing has been decided about the format at this stage so you'll just have to wait. For the time being you'll just have to find other ways of winding up your network manager... Z

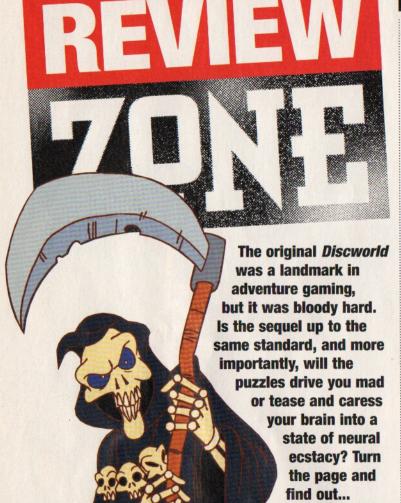




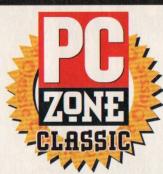
(Left) Conceptual scribbling of a Tha'Room warrior.

(Right) War Wind's map displays are not neglected in the slightest, as you can see here.

82



THE ZONE SCORING SYSTEM



90+ CLASSIC

The highest accolade a game can attain. A wonderful example of gaming excellence that deserves to be recognised and indeed cherished, or something.



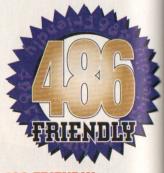
80–89 RECOMMENDED

An excellent game that simply lacks that certain something that makes it one of the true greats. Well worth checking out, though



20 and below PANTS

Absolutely bloody awful. Crap with a capital C. Naff with a capital N. You get the picture.



486 FRIENDLY

The DX2 is still one of the most popular spec machines, but how do you know what games will run on the thing? This icon shows you which games you can still enjoy ever if you don't have a ninja Pentium.



games run slowly, even on melapec machines with ninjascopic phics cards. Just run something Magic Carpet in hi-res on virtually merc and you end up with somerunning in Jerk-o-vision.



waks for itself really - if it's got len kon slapped on it, it's been megned to take advantage of all Windows 95 offers



In perspective

This is designed to be a pure visual guide as to how games of a similar style compare to one another. The bars do not relate to previous review scores... they are simply an indication of how the reviewer feels about the products on a sliding scale.

Game 1

Game 2

• Skip @ EA Mark Blewitt Neil Critchlow Andrew McCombie • Stephen McGill Pete Hawley

Thanks this issue to

· Amaya 'Tufty' Lopez

(Right) We love racing

games, we think

they're rather fab

John Madden '97 89 **Scorched Planet Network Q RAC Rally** 96 Road Rash '95 100 Flight Simulator '95 103

Reviews

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Discworld 2

Formula 1 Manager **Privateer 2:** The Darkening 113 119 **Gene Wars**

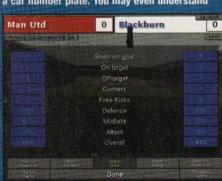
PC Zone use Dan PCs exclusively 'cos they're absolutely fab. If you want any more info on Dan machines, you can call them on:

Personal Computers

Looking back

Championship Manager 2 (again) When I said that I was going to write my

'Looking Back' piece on CM2 everyone in the office started laughing. You see, hardly a day goes by without me playing a couple of matches (just to keep my eye in you understand) and you just wouldn't believe the ribbing and jibes I have to put up with. "Still playing around with that fecking spread sheet, Wells? You are soooo sad!" If you've played it among company you'll know exactly what I'm wittering on about. You'll also understand why I can't help giving a wry smile every time I see the letters AMC, DML FLC etc on a car number plate. You may even understand



the agonising torment I regularly go through at 3am, when I'm desperately trying to force myself to sleep, but I'm having another CM2 selection nightmare and my brain won't disengage. Tony Vaughan is injured and I'm frantically trying to remember who in my squad can cover for him and whether I'll have to change the formation and tactics of the team to accommodate the new player. It's sad, I know, but I just can't help it.

And now, just as my interest was finally starting to wane (after taking Millwall to European glory and quitting in the year 2015, likewise Ipswich 'til 2008 and my beloved Arsenal squad - currently standing at third in the league in the year 2002 after major trophy success), it's about to start all again 'cause Domark have just released the start of season update disc. Get well soon Tony. Your team needs you. And I need my sleep

Jeremy Wells, Editor

Z (again)

A strange thing happened after we publishe our Z review. I spoke to lots of people on the net who were all complaining that Z was too easy. When Patrick reviewed it he said it was

bloody hard. We all agreed. It was bloody hard. So what were all these guys on about saying they'd completed it in a couple of days?

All was revealed at the ECTS show when I Brothers). Eric explained that the final boxed version was a lot easier than the one we had in the office (ie the one that drove us up the bloody wall). Apparently the Bitmaps still had people testing the game while we were reviewing it, and a lot of the testers found it way too hard (no, really?), so, they toned it down a bit. In Eric's own words: "We wanted to make the game challenging, but not unfair. In the version you had, the computer would more often than not start a level with more units than you. In the boxed version about 90% of the levels start with both sides having an equal amount of units. We've also solved the route-finding problem (units roaming off half-way round the world to

get to somewhere round the corner

for some of the levels. We've also re-designed life levels so that you can rescue a potentially Mastrous situation, instead of penalising you defeat just because you made one mistake". fric also revealed that they will be making a 'net which will enable you to play a two-player of Z with your mate without having to buy illither copy of the game. We'll give you more news III this when we know exactly how this is going to In the meantime, any of you who have been off buying the game because it's too hard, er, it so go off and buy a copy now.

Chris Anderson, Deputy Editor

Kingdom O' Magic

What is it with me and puerile humour? I'm years old and I still find farting hilariously SCI's Kingdom O' Magic tickled my (childish) Illimybone, mixing over-the-top point-and-click allownturing and tons of extremely silly and Hillularous humour. A liberal dousing of gratuitous maring impressed me no end, as well as the mementioned pumping.

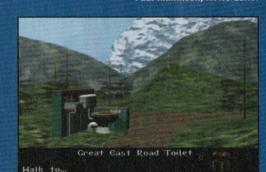
intervence got it though - some reviewers even immed the game to hell as they shamefully missed in point of the entire thing. Granted Kingdom O' hade did look as rough as a dog's arse, but this

served only to disguise an innovative and enjoyable non-linear hybrid of the RPG and adventure genres. Three completely separate scenarios of varying difficulty proved a top idea too - rather than sticking with just the one.

The inane banter between the main two characters and the many wandering NPCs worked really well, even though the open-ended nature of the game made finding individuals a pain at times.

Kingdom 'O Magic has the same humour that made Ren & Stimpy and Beavis And Butt Head so popular with morons like myself. Maybe it's about time I finally grew up. Nah, sod it. Treat yourself; have a laugh...

Paul Mallinson, News Editor



Cool games We see hundreds of games over the months but there are a few

that we hang on to and continue to play at lunchtime/when we're supposed to be doing more important stuff...

Network Q Rally

Quake

Syndicate Wars Privateer 2: The Darkening

Scorched Planet

Crap games There are some games that you

can leave in the middle of the room with a big sign next to them saying "please steal me" and you still can't get rid of the bloody things ...

Master Of Dimensions

Olympic Soccer

Tracei

CyberBikes

Since Paul Presley habitually spells Wizard with two 'Z's, who better to take a look at the sequel to the best-selling adventure game of last year?

HAVE TO BE CAREFUL WHAT I SAY about Discworld II. The last person to unjustly criticise a Terry Pratchett project found himself being quoted on the dust jacket of his next book where his comments made the man seem fool (to be exact, Tom Paulin, Irish Poet, said on BBC2's The Late Review: "The man's a complete amateur. He doesn't even write in chapters. Hasn't a clue" An amateur that's sold more books than God nonetheless - well. nearly). Luckily, I've

got nothing but good

Discworld II as it's one of

come along since,

well, Discworld I.

the best adventures to

things to say about

ZONIE CLASSIC



Rory, Rory, tell us a storyThe plot has been penned by the

folks at Perfect Entertainment rather than Pratchett himself, although it's based upon two or three of the books and the author did spend time going over the script to make sure it retained the right flavour.

Combining Reaper Man, Mort and Moving Pictures, the tale is about what happens when Death goes missing. Having been caught in a Lethal Weapon 3-style explosive intro, the Grim Reaper has been blown to

the distant continent of XXXX (pronounced Four X – it's the *Discworld* equivalent of Australia) and it's up to you as Rincewind to sort out the mess as without Death, no one's dying.

The game is split into four acts, each with a separate goal. The first is to try and summon Death to find out what's going on. The second is to travel to XXXX and persuade him to return to work. The third sees Rincewind becoming Death and the final act is where it all comes together and Rincewind has to save Death's life.

To give too much away would spoil things, suffice to say it captures the





perfectly, as well as appealing to a wider audience thanks to a liberal dose of *Monty Python* about the place. The opening song is penned and sung by Eric Idle (who plays Rincewind again) and to say that it sets the tone for the rest of the game is something of an understatement.

The game really scores in the way it's constructed. My personal benchmark for cartoon-style adventures has always been the original *Monkey Island* game and *Discworld II* surpasses it easily. The game consists of four acts, each with







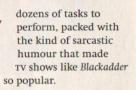


There are plenty of top-notch adventures around at the moment, each catering for different tastes. Here's the top three:

Discworia i

Discworl

The Gene Machine



is it stupidly difficult again?

Unlike the first game, the challenge has been toned down slightly in response to all the feedback

received. That's not to say it's perfect, rather that it's better structurally. A lot of the first game was spent wandering around with about two dozen objects and with no clue as to what you should be doing. This time you always know what it is you have to do, just not how to do it. Plus, the puzzles are less illogical and more fitting to the continuation of the story, eliminating the high frustration-factor that was associated with the first game, but without losing any of the challenge.

Monkey Island's strength was that it piled puzzle on top of puzzle so that every time you took one step towards a goal, the goal would suddenly move off to the side and force you to

turn around. Most of today's
adventures don't seem to bother
with this much depth, opting
for a single-layering effect. There
is a locked door. To open it you



(Above left) The Elven Queen does what she does best – pose.

(Below) I told you not

the shower with you...

to take two bottles into

(Above) Arrrgh! Fishing nets. Nooo! Make the nightmares stop...

(Left) Death's granddaughter, Susan. Ahh, sweet









need a key. The key is in a jar on the table. As simple as that. Monkey Island's Discworld II has taken, is to say, there can only pick one of them. The table is surrounded by a moat. The moat is once you'd got hold of the key, the

What this does is increase the challenge level of the game tenfold. Of course, it's easy to let this become more frustrating than challenging, so the key is to present these problems in a way that keeps the player's interest. This is where the rich presentation of

Discworld II scores out. You simply can't fault it. The animations are superb, almost Disney-like in quality, and they far exceed those of the first game (in fact, there's a scene involving time-travel that will show you exactly how improved they are). The audio quality is







also superb, with brilliant voice overs mixing with wonderfully atmospheric musical scores always a much neglected area of game design in my book.

The curse of competition Anyway, we've

now reached the part of the proceedings where I have to dust off the giant Score-O-Tron machine, feed in all the data regarding the game and press the green flashing button marked EVALUATE!

Before I assign a numerical value to the score box, I have to take you back, back in time, back to the misty bygone era that was 1995.

The world was a younger, more innocent place back then. Noel's House





Party was at the peak of its popularity, the horrors of the Spice Girls were still just a gleam in a pervy record producer's eye, and Newcastle were a prominent force in British

Premier League football. In the January 1995 issue (issue number 22 for all those

issue number junkies out there), we were treated to the original

Discworld game and came away suitably impressed,

awarding it a score of 96. A trifle generous, you think? Well, at the time there were very few quality adventure games about and we were perhaps

a little grateful for one to have appeared. There's no denying that it was indeed a class game. It was challenging, entertaining and funny the best adventure since Monkey Island some

might have said. Now, as you have read, I'm suitably impressed with the

(Left) Rincewind tries to serenade the love of his life. Perhaps 'A Wizard's Staff Has A Knob On The End' wasn't the best choice.

(Relow left) Death and Binky try out for the annual Biggin Hill Aerial Rodeo.

the highest rated games in the history of PC Zone, there is also far more in the way of competition about at the moment and what it doesn't do is separate itself

from the pack in

any major way.

game. I'd say it's better

simply because it

uses all the same

formulae and

manages to

improve the

quality all round.

However, I'm not

even higher score.

Aside from the fact

would make it one of

that a score of 97

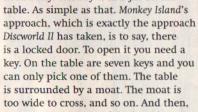
going to award it an

than the original

Broken Sword is a similarlooking game and is also quite playable, as is The Gene Machine. Zork Nemesis provides an interactive atmosphere)







hide the lock.

is a locked door. To open it you need a key. On the table are seven keys and you too wide to cross, and so on. And then, door would do something annoying like

distances in a heartbeat and deadlier than Champion, Mr. Ed and Silver rolled into one. Its name?

In conversation with Terry Pratchett

author, creator of the Discworld and all-round top literary bloke, Terry **Pratchett has been writing books** since 1987 and has steadily worked his way into the bestseller lists with each successive release. We caught up with the man on the eve of a **US promotional tour.**

PCZ: I get the impression that your nvolvement with this sequel is less than with the first. How confident are you in Perfect Entertainment when it comes to capturing the essence of the Discworld series?

You're right - up to a point. I got

very involved in the first one because, well, it was the first one. I was rather more relaxed about DWII because they'd done the first one well, and I more or less restricted my involvement to some polite suggestions', such as getting the bugs out before it went on sale, and doing a fair amount of work on the script. In short, I was more prepared to trust people.

PCZ: What do you feel the sequel will offer to the non-Discworld reader?

The reason the DW games have peen made is that the books were successful, but you don't need to read

the books in order to play them been helpful for the first game, and Mort and Reaper Man might be of assistance in this one). What the game will offer to the non-DW reader is a superb game. And, of course, an introduction to a fascinating series of books, nudge, nudge...

(Right top) Rincewind

learns the art of camel-

Altogether now. "I'm

Always look on the

bright side of death. De-doo. De-dum-de-

Brian and so's my wife.

(Right bottom) Death's

magical beast capable

horse. A fearsome.

of flying over vast

Er, Binky...

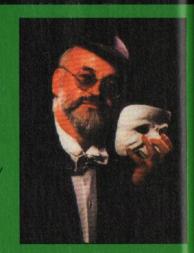
spittle avoidance.

(Right centre)

de-de-doo."

PCZ: Discworld 2 has quite a substantial Monty Python feel to it. How close do you feel the two genres are?

I don't think they're very similar. Apart from anything else, DW is saner than Python! The Pythonesque 'feel' in



places is a sort of conspiracy between e game designers and Eric Idle's voice. What scamps they are. (Grins).

PCZ: How much of a surprise was enormous success of the first game to you (Discworld being the third most opular PC game of 1995)?

I expected it to do well! I think it was the voices that made it successful for me, Eric Idle now is the voice of Rincewind.

PCZ: In your eyes, how good a job

THE I was very happy about that. Discworld has changed a lot in the last ten years, but it certainly had the feel of the earlier books.

PCZ: How much time did you spend playing it once it was finished?

TP: I played it all the way through to the end! The fact that I knew the script helped a bit, but not as much as you'd think. I spent far too much time running round Ankh-Morpork with fishing nets when I ought to have been writing.

PCZ: Where do you feel it either, at

the very most, didn't work or at the very least, could have been better?

TIP: I think we got bogged down a bit with ink spots and such, and I was a bit unhappy about one or two places that seemed too sequence-dependent. It was sometimes too easy to almost get things right and then get thrown off the scent because they hadn't worked. I think we'll be a bit more player-friendly this time. I don't think the phrase 'That doesn't work!' occurs at all.

PCZ: I understand you've finally relented to Hollywood pressure and given the okay for a Discworld

film to be put forward. What finally swung it for you?

The Mort project has been around for four or five years. There have been a lot of false starts. I remember one American film guy saying "the American public isn't ready for Death as a sympathetic character" about 18 months before *Bill and Ted's* Bogus Journey came out, and who was the popular character in that? Well, well, it was Death. I think we might have a decent chance this time. But, hey, this is the film business. They've paid me money, but it still might never happen.

Blood Out Of A Mouse

(Warning: the following describes one of the game's intricate puzzle sequences. If you don't want to spoil the game, then don't read on. If you just don't care about such things, have a rather foolhardy manner or the memory of a goldfish, then go ahead. Knock yourself out...)

A good example of the puzzle structure I was talking about elsewhere comes early on in Act One. One of the ingredients Rincewind needs to collect is 4cc of mouse block To get it, Rincewind needs to become a vampire and bite a hapless rodent. This requires the 'borrowing' of an old vampire's false teeth and, naturally, a mouse. The first is obtained by finding the vampire's sleeping place and taking them from the glass of water beside his bed. To do this you need a ladder to climb to the



coffin. The ladder can only be gotten from an amorous dwarf who requires the name of a suitable woman first. Even once you've got the ladder you still need to convince the vampire to go to bed, which requires getting a rooster to crow ahead of time (since the Act takes place at night). This means atching a rooster with the use of drugged corn (which has to be found), and then you have the problem of sobering it up again to make it crow. And then, of course, there's the small problem of finding a willing mouse...



« second to none and The Pandora Directive has just as much humour to it. Of course, this is not meant as a criticism, you understand. I'm just saying that it's part of a larger crowd now and this

affects the way you view things. Plus there's the forthcoming Curse Of Monkey Island from LucasArts and who knows how good that will be?

But in and of itself, Discworld II really is superb. Fans and nonfans of Pratchett should all find something to enjoy, the former being able to revel in the elements of the author's



loony - No. 34 in a series of 50.

(Far Left) Cut Me Own Throat Dibbler tries to flog his grandmother





world made real, the latter being attracted by the other more mainstream Python-esque side of things.

Of course, if you're not a fan of either then you're still left with a challenging adventure game to play with. What more could you want? Z

In conversation with Nigel Planer

'80s, thanks to his portrayal of Neil in *The Young Ones*, Nigel Planer has since been involved in numerous comedy projects including the brilliant I An Actor.
Currently he's promoting his new book (written in conjunction with Red Dwarf's Robert Llewellyn) Therapy And How To Avoid It.

PCZ: How did you get involved with the Discworld II project?

NIE: Well, I read all the Pratchett novels onto Audio Books. I've done about 12 and the people at Perfect Entertainment got to hear of that. So I've already done a lot of the voices there. I must have done about 20 or so for the game.

PCZ: So you were already very familiar with the Discworld genre. Were you a fan before you did

Not at all. I'd never read any, actually. I'd done a lot of different Audio Books and suddenly got the request to go and do that and found that because of the Pythonesque humour I had a good feel for the speed of the dialogue.

PCZ: How different was the process for recording the game's voices from the regular Audio Books?

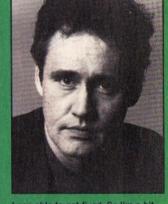
a microphone so it's similar in that respect, but the main difference is that with the book you're sat there reading all the prose and doing all the voices. For the game you're just reading your lines and even then it's not like a radio play with all the other actors there. They're all edited in later. So you're just on your own, blind. The books take about three days to do, the game took just one, very, very long day.

Poza How familiar with the original game were you?

NIP: Well, until I did this game I wasn't at all familiar with it. But Perfect sent me Discworld which really got me into it. I've got an eight-year-old son and we switched it on at about eleven one morning, we didn't break for lunch and when I next looked at my watch it was half past six that night. We hadn't even got to the end of Act One. Even with the little hint book. A couple of mates have also got kids and I've given them my number and every now and then I'm like a scout leader. I get a call saying, "How do I get out of hyperspace?" or something like that.

PCZ Do you think this will lead you into other games?

NIP! Well, I'm a convert because of Discworld. I had started on some others but my computer suddenly NIP: Well, you're sitting there with got a Type 11 error which I haven't



been able to get fixed. So I'm a bit pissed off. Just as the enthusiasm started, my computer jammed up and I can't use the CD. It lost all my saved games so we've had to

PCZ: Welcome to the world of PC games. Is this an area that you might want to get involved with professionally again?

NP: Actually, I've started to write a game with my brother and the help of Perfect Entertainment. What's good about Discworld and using comedy is that you have to think laterally and possibly you might have to cheat to get the result. It's quite mind-strengthe like that. They're boring if you just do what you're told. It's interesting to have to get into the mind of the programmer, to think obscurely to solve the problem.

Tech specs

Memory: 8Mb (16Mb recommended)

Processor: 486DX2/66

Graphics: VGA/SVGA Sound: All major cards

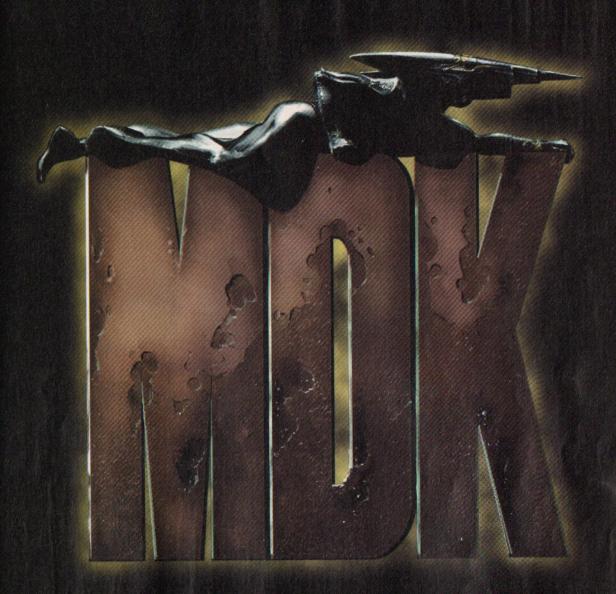
Controls: Mouse

Score

Everything you could want in an adventure game.

Price: £49.99 Release Date: November **Publisher:** Psygnosis Tel: 0151 282 3000





WILKMAN DECLINES KNIGHTHOOD?

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Almost exactly a year since we previewed it as Madden 96, Madden 97 is finally released for the PC. We gave it to Patrick McCarthy, because his timekeeping is almost as bad.



Madden NFL '97



his is the first version of Madden to reach the PC for many, many years — since the days, in fact, when an EGA monitor was something to boast about, rather than something to hollow out to make an attractive hanging basket. While people with 16-bit consoles have been enjoying regular Madden action in the intervening years, PC owners have only had the memory of the original PC





version and its tiny figures.
Resembling Sensible Soccer players
who'd been semi-inflated by
bicycle pump, they were mousecontrolled and emitted sound
effects like a guinea-pig farting
down the other end of a garden hose.

Since those glorious years, we've seen many claimants to the PC's crown, from the ancient Mike Ditka's Power Football to the current, rather good FPS Football—interestingly, though, they're always referred to as "the nearest thing to John Madden for the PC." Well, now it's finally here. And it's very good.

Just like the telly

When you load the game you'll find yourself plunged neck-deep into a seething pit of logos, as the NFL, NFL Players Association, NFL Films, STATS Inc, EA Sports and Superbowl XXXI all get shoved in your face. This salvo of trademarks rolls into an excellent opening sequence that puts many TV credit sequences to shame. In fact, the

game is beautifully presented throughout, with loads of nice touches — like the facility to check out the starting line-up, complete with player photos, whilst on-pitch. (The only weakness is the in-game 'rahk' music, which had people in the office fighting to switch it off — imagine a tennis player's band, playing stuff heavily influenced by a World's Greatest Stunts programme theme and you're getting

there.)
The 'just like the »





The play's the thing

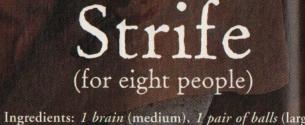
One area where the game hasn't progressed from the early PC version is in play creation. You can customise a playbook, but there's no way of making up your own plays from scratch. When you think that even its distant ancestor allowed you to create your own, this is disappointing for anyone who enjoys the coaching and play-calling side of the game. If that's your bag, Front Page Sports Football has a superb play-editor, with facilities for moving players around both before and after the snap.

out what

end is."

"They don't call them

tights for nothing..."



Blend until smooth.
Sip during game play.

« telly' effect is kept up throughout. As well as John Madden's trademark interjections, Pat Summerall, his reallife partner in the coolest pairing in sport, dispenses the play-by-play stuff, and Leslie Visser even gives you injury reports from "down on the field". The whole thing flows very well. It helps that American football is a stop-start affair, and that most of the commentary takes place after the event even in real life, but it's still really atmospheric. Summerall has that authoritative voice that just sounds right, and the general comments and injury reports flow so much more easily than the halting stuff you get in football, which have to be done mixand-match style as the action unfolds.

Play the game

There are the usual options for exhibition and league play, and the facility to create customised leagues and play schedules as simple or complicated as you like (see "Man and Superman" boxout.) You can play and coach, or just

"Hey, didn't I just

"Yup, our art editor

is a tight end, too ... "

There are only three

camera angles, but

who cares as long

as you can see what you're doing?

see you on the

other page?"



Man and Superman

congratulations. At least you aren't one of those arseholes who walk about wearing the shirt of the last Superbowl winner. But things aren't exactly going to be a lot of fun if you try to take them to glory in this. Unless you cheat a little.

There are comprehensive options to create your own leagues, teams and even players. The easy way is to take your Hicksville Shitehawks (or whatever they're called) and trawl through the other teams in the game, nicking all the superstars. Or, if you have

the patience, you can make up your own and call them after

yourself, your pets and the women you fancy but haven't got a

hope of ever talking to. (That should give you plenty of scope.)
Each player created is rated in a number of areas, and you can
create a team of moderately talented lads (and lasses) — or a

team of superhumans. If you're particularly bitter about somethin

you might even like to make up a team of people who've upset you in some way, make them very weedy, and beat the living daylights out of them over several hours.

ou happen to follow one of the crappier "franchises" -

coach, and there all the current teams along with all the great teams from history - the 1982 Redskins, 1968 Jets, etc. Strangely, given the game's console roots, and passing methods, there are no facilities for gamepads and as a result, passing can be a bit fiddly. You can edit your own playbooks, but unlike in FPS Football, you can't create individual plays from scratch and the selection of plays is nowhere near as plentiful - but enough for most people.

Aiiieee! My eyes! My eyes!

Graphically, it's lush. Unlike most of the Virtual Stadium games, there are only three camera angles, with options for fixed or dynamic cameras. But given that the only really helpful angle is from the end-zone, this is okay. There's a lot of graphical detail - so much so, that in wider shots, moving the stadium around to swap views was in jerk-ovision on a P166. But you can switch off any or all of the texturing if you want from the crowd and sky textures, through end-zone, grass and on-pitch logos and markings, to numbers and shadows on players - even the stadium.

And for those of you who like a bit of multimeeja, you can also go to Madden University to learn stuff like why the



tight end is so called (and why it makes him so popular with his team-mates in the bath after the game). As for direct comparisons between this and FPS Football, this is far better presented, looks better and plays better – if you have the hardware. FPS Football has more depth, with long-term career coaching modes and 'proper' drafts, but nowhere near the appeal of this for the less anal, or more casual, player. Z

Tech specs

Memory: 8Mb RAM

Processor: Pentium 75

Graphics: VGA/SVGA Sound: SoundBlaster

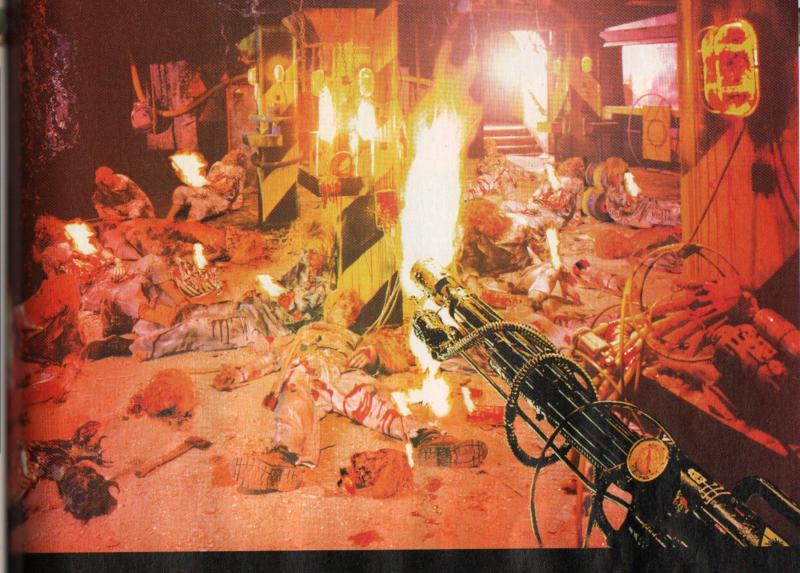
Controls: Keyboard, mouse, joystick

Score

The new best American football game for the PC.

Price: £39.95 Release Date: Out now Publisher: Electronic Arts Tel: 01753 549442



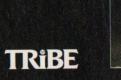


"It's a killer rush"

DAWN OF DARKNESS











"I read in the paper that the so-called 'greenhouse effect' had been caused by farting cows," said Paul Mallinson.
"I'm not sure if it's true, but I haven't smoked since."

IGHTNING-FAST ARCADE BLASTERS tend to have a fanatical following the world over - well, the good ones, that is. Games such as Tempest, Robotron, Choplifter and Eugene Jarvis' seminal Defender made a name for themselves in the formative years of computer gaming by stripping away virtually everything else in the program but the gameplay. There were no fancy graphics, no poncy cut-scenes - just a few flashing lights, a control interface and the player. Usually with a bunch of your mesmerised mates rubbernecking over your shoulder down at Noble's Arcade emporium (the one with the china figurines in the



window and that annoying git standing next to you going "Hey mate, looks like you've got a nudge there!").

The saying "the simplest games are always the best" may not ring true in every instance, but in the case of the shoot 'em up it doesn't help to overcomplicate matters. Criterion's Scorched Planet is an extremely commendable attempt to recreate the 'buzz' and simplicity of the great Defender, but in a very '90s way. Forget the rubbish story, the silly names (Alex Gibson – I ask you...) and cheesy FMV sequences, they're nothing to do with anything really. What Scorched Planet requires are fast reflexes and a strong constitution.

A, one, two, three, four...

The idea is simple. You're supposed to be some bloody do-gooder passer-by 'saviour' to a group of human colonists under attack by a huge alien spacecraft and the entire contents of its neverending fighter bay. These colonists (little chunky blokes that stomp around the huge polygonal landscape) are vital for progress, the aim of the game being to



(Left) Bitten by spiders, these zombies are on the lookout for more people to infect. Cure them within two minutes or their heads explode. Cool.

(Above) God damn aliens have hidden my Space Gate inside this metallic box!



(Left) If you get bored, it's possible to round up your colonists for a camping holiday at the seaside. Now we've brought the camping stove, a pan for the beans...

(Right) Mutant Space where everything goes pear-shaped.

(Below) You've got to search for the heeeeero inside yourself, yooo've got to search for the heeero insaaaaaad! rescue as many as possible. They can actually help out too, finding new bits for your ship and even shooting the aliens. Just give them the chance and they'll do their best to help you. Let too many die though, and it's pretty much game over as you are plunged into the darkness of Mutant Space where the player is offered the chance to redeem himself in a fight to the death. So protecting the workforce is of primary concern and luckily the vehicle at your disposal is well-equipped to handle that.

Everybody going' kung fu fightin'

A hybrid of both pseudo tank and pseudo jet fighter, your craft can morph fluidly between the two at the stroke of a key. In 'jet' mode it moves quickly with a high degree of manoeuvrability, which is ideal for combat, but it cannot pick up colonists or power-ups. 'Tank' mode offers more protection at the expense of speed and movement, but it uses less fuel and can pick up the bonuses by simply driving over them.



Scorched Planet



The controls are simple and the cockpit view is adequate, the interior of which comes adorned with all the usual techno gubbins (scanner, weapons and fuel gauges, etc.). A neat 180 degree flip manoeuvre, which instantly reverses your direction (borrowed from Defender), is a brilliant addition which contributes so much to the intuitive nature of the control system. Ultimately it takes only a short amount of time to atone to the dynamics of both the tank and iet, and you'll be morphing from one to another with consummate ease after completing the first couple of 'easy' levels.

Altogether, there are eight stages, each with three sub-missions spread over an array of terrain that ranges from ice to desert to mountainous regions - all finely texture-mapped. Graphically, Scorched Planet is sound enough. Everything is constructed of polygons (even the front



end which is a rather smart Buttonfly rip-off) in high or low-res, depending on what your machine can handle. A P133 will give the player an acceptably smooth game in full monty 640 x 480 mode (Scorched Planet also supports a number of accelerator cards, such as the Matrox Mystique) but, to be honest, the lightning speed of the gameplay means that for most people the super-smooth low-res option becomes the preferred choice after initial experimentation.

As fast as lightning...

Ultimately, it is this inherent speed and the easy controls that make Scorched Planet such a buzz to play. As you progress a puzzley element is introduced that makes your craft start to malfunction, forcing the player to re-think their strategy. Similarly, as you progress alien characteristics change, and the really nasty ones (such as the spiders that turn the colonists into zombies) are enough to cause heart palpitations in



(Top left) As a million manuals from a million different games have said in the past: "...and only you can save them."

(Above) This big mother ship-type thing is blowing up my cities, which I'm not best pleased about. Unfortunately, shooting the thing does nothing but get you killed.

even the most experienced of gamers. On later levels, when rock hard gun turrets and end-of-level bosses appear things start to become even more difficult. Challenging it certainly is, but rarely frustrating, because it's so well thought out.

Scorched Planet is a gameplayer's game and deserves to do well. It's not perfect - at times I felt lost in a sea of power-ups, and cycling through the inventory is sometimes problematic in the heat of battle.

The Mutant Space sections, potentially a good idea, I found to be a bit of a waste of time, mainly due to the absurd difficulty levels and the fruitless blasting which rapidly became boring.

But these are minor quibbles in the whole scheme of things. Overall, Scorched Planet is cool to handle and sexy by design. On a fast PC it's an intense and absorbing ride. Shut your eyes when the FMV pops up, concentrate only on the game, and you will have a good time. z

Tech specs

Memory: 8Mb

Processor: 486DX2/66

Graphics: VGA, SVGA

Sound: All major sound cards

Controls: Mouse, joystick, keyboard

Score

Almost, but sadly not quite. Defender.

Price: £44.99 Release Date: Out now **Publisher:** Virgin Tel: 0171-368 2255

It's sheep we're up against

Those poor trapped colonists aren't having much of a good time it seems. In fear of their lives and constantly under fire from not only the aliens, but also from stray shots from your own craft, they are sent out again and again on seemingly impossible search and retrieve missions to maintain the ever-depleting resources of your swanky death machine. Pick them up, put them down - give them guns even - and they run around causing all manner of bother for those dastardly aliens. Co-ordinating their movement is simple enough, and here's how you do it



Step one: Land near some civilian color Turn into the tank and open the bay doors - this lures them inside (and who knows what goes on in there...



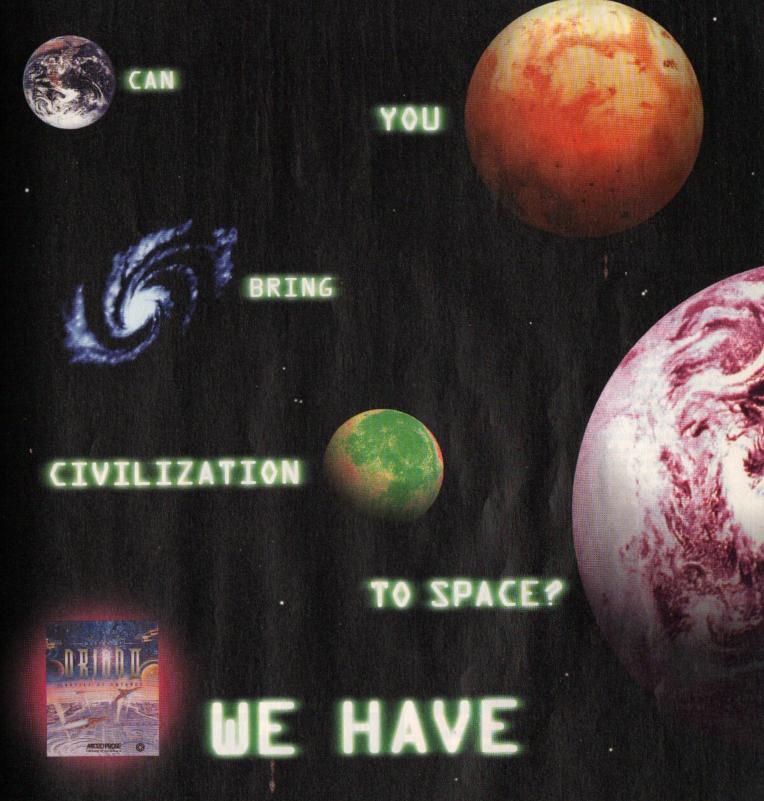
Step three: The colonists will automatically head in the direction of the beacon, dragging anything collectable they find on the way. Here are two nists demonstrating the fact.



Step two: Before flying off to find stuff, decide on lezvous point and drop a beacon there. Zip off, find some goodies, then send your little engers out to collect them



Step four: If all goes to plan and none of your blokes are killed or nabbed on the way back to the meeting place, there should be a fair-sized collection of booty waiting for you to pick up.



If you loved Sid Meier's Civilization II you'll be in ecstasy with MASTER OF ORION II: Battle At Antares. The challenge has now increased: new technology and new alien races presented with fantastic animations in SVGA graphics. Develop entire planetary systems and command vast fleets in detailed tactical combat and galaxy-wide exploration. Play in exciting multi-player modes: Local Area Network, via modem, or compete in a 'hot-seat' game. Master of Orion: Battle At Antares. Take your Civilization to the stars.



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Duncan MacDonald thinks he's a really good rally driver simply because he once crashed his VW camper van into a Range Rover. It makes no sense, we know, but please humour him as he attempts to review Network Q RAC Rally.

ere's a little song I
wrote earlier, and it's
all about how brilliant
I am at driving. It's
set to the Old MacDonald Had A
Farm tune. Here goes: "I'm so
skill at driving, yeah – I'm fab fab,
fab fab, fab. I can go faster than
anyone else — I can can, can can,
can!" It goes on for about 30
verses, but you've probably got
the drift. I even crash excellently.



I do, I do! I once piled my old VW camper into the back of a Range Rover at 50 mph and emerged completely unscathed, even though I wasn't wearing a seatbelt. Ho! And as for the occupants of the Range Rover in question? Ha! How about this for extreme non-excellence: when I eventually received the itemised bill from their insurance company one of the entries read "Dry cleaning for a soiled pair of trousers, £7.50". It's true, I swear it. Cacked pantaloons.

That was a link, believe it or not...

The spectators at RAC Rally events often cack their pantaloons as well. They huddle together on grassy banks at the apex of dangerous corners as if to say

(Above) One of the best things about Network Rally is the number of tracks – there's 28 of 'em and they're all rather excellent. Some take nearly half an hour to complete (!)

(Right) As well as different types of track surfaces, you'll have to contend with increasingly difficult conditions – such as fog, snow, ice and night time stages.

Don't forget to dip!

all sort of nonchalant, as relaxed as can be. Let's call him Captain Scarlet (because he's pretending to be indestructible). He's watching an Audi Quattro hacking towards him, not yet aware yet that it's actually an 'out of control' Audi Quattro - something altogether less edifying. It nears by the femto-second, looming larger and larger. His parkaat us. we're not clad peers eventually click, and begin diving sideways, into bushes and afraid'. Deep in their minds, however, they're adding 'besides, whatnot. Captain Scarlet, however, these drivers are so good we're actually takes a couple more seconds to realise safe as houses!' But, of course, they're the truth of the situation, by which not, as you'll know if you've seen the time his only option is to leap backwards. As the Audi Quattro driver 'geezer and lake' TV out-take. No? You haven't seen it? It's brilliant. There's suddenly regains control and avoids the grassy bank, fearless Captain this crap bloke, okay, and he's standing in the most ludicrous trackside position Scarlet is entering the chilly waters possible. He's got his hands on his hips, of a Welsh lake. Ha ha!





We finally reach the game...

Network O RAC Rally is littered with little rallying clips, although, unfortunately, the Bloke In Lake out-take isn't among them. But I'm not here to talk about FMV sequences - I'm here to talk about the bits that go between them. The game, in other words. In fact, you'll have seen a tiny bit of it for yourself if you've loaded this month's coverdisk, as there's an entire stage to play through. And this fact, to be honest, is also rather handy for me. You see, Network Q is pretty processor-hungry if you want to see it at its best. It's eminently toggable, admittedly, but only you know how much (or rather how little) you're prepared to put up with.

So - did it run fine on your machine in all its everythingness? Then no problems. Did you have to shorten the horizon? Hmm. Did you then have to lose detail? Poo. And did you have to shrink the screen until the viewing area was the size of a matchbox? Oh dear. What I'm suggesting, basically, is that you'll now know that when I say things like 'pixel-sized trees in the far distance grow alarmingly quickly in size until they rush past your offside window in a blur of photo-realistic leaf-ishness' I'm doing so only because I played Network Q on the office P166. Comprendski? So edit my enthusiasm as you see fit.

Courses for horses...

You've seen 'the track' (assuming, as said, you've played the cover disk). But that's as nowt – because the complete version of *Network Q* contains a whopping 28

tracks. Yup, 28: which to hammer the point home is as many fingers and thumbs as you'd find on the hands of three whole people (er, if the third person was called Billy 'No Thumbs' McVicar or something). You've got to applaud, though, haven't you, especially when you learn that - just as with Indycar or F1GP - all these tracks are true to life and lovingly re-created from the real things. And while some may be on the short side (a fair bit shorter than the one you've played) others are virtually, er, well... you can get tired. Really. One of them goes on for about half an hour. You could nod off if it wasn't for the digitised voice of Tony 'Top Gear' Mason continually screaming "Hard left, hard right!" in your ear.

Tony 'Top Gear' Mason...

While on the subject of Tony Mason, you may be wondering why Europress got him to do the in-car navigation voice. Two reasons: (a) he was a real-life RAC rally co-driver at about the same time that Arkwright invented the Spinning Jenny, and (b) he was quite cheap as 'celebrities' go (£1,500 for the day. apparently). However, a slight bête noire here is

that Tony

sometimes gives duff





(top) You gotta roll with it – you gotta take your time!

(Left) The graphical detail is very high all round. Track side detail is excellent and all the cars are very well modelled. You'll need a nice Pentiun to run the game full-on, but you can crank down the detail to help speed things up.

(Below) The cars

do actually handle

differently, and you

can opt for a front,

rear or four wheel

drive car depending

on your preference.

In Perspective

There have been some good arcade racing games on the PC, but *Network Q RAC Rally* has undoubtedly got the most to offer.

Network Q RAC Rally

The Need For Speed

Screamer

information. "Hairpin right!" he screamed at me one time. He might well have added "But you'll never make it, I should have told you earlier!". It's all part of the fun though, I suppose. And anyway, a little game I sometimes play is to add my own scenario to games: and in Network Q it's that the previous evening Tony discovered, through a mutual acquaintance, that I'd been shagging his wife for six years, and that his daughter Sarah was in fact MY daughter Sarah.

Stupid Welsh names...

A lot of the rally is based in Wales, meaning that you have to put up with driving through places called Dyfi and Cefn. And that makes me very angry – but not half as angry as the ludicrously fickle Welsh weather. With the 'always sunny' option turned off, the elements are introduced bigtime. Rain, snow and fog happen all over the shop, occasionally compounded by the presence of darkness. There aren't many streetlights in Dyfnant, as you can imagine.

Still, this weather stuff certainly makes for some atmospheric (no pun intended) gameplay. Fog reduces in density with altitude, for instance, meaning that at those near sea-level moments you're completely in the bitter hands of

Tony, the husband of the mother of your love child. He's not so completely in control when you're simply in snow, however. But then again, neither are you. (Especially if you picked the wrong tyres.) And the rain. Ah, the rain. If ever the visuals and sonics of a game gelled to perfection, it's in the downpour sections of Network Q. You know how cosy it is inside a car during a thunderstorm or whatever? Like when you're parked up or whatever? It's reproduced perfectly. Pull over to the side of the road. Sip on a cup of tea. Spark up a ciggie. Allow

Honest Joe's Quality Motors... 1 Subaru Impreza: 4 VW Golf GTI 16V: 5 Skoda Felicia: 2 Ford Escort 6 Proton Wira: 3 Renault Megane: The adverts reckon it Say what you like A classy motor what'll RS Cosworth: (Putting on accent). Only three owners from talks to yer. But that's abart Skodas, but... get you noticed. Top What more d'ya need new, an' two of 'em 'ave

I'll agree with ver.

Haw haw! Just me

us an offer, eh?

likkle joke, innit. Give

yourself to be hypnotised into oblivion by the swoosh and click of the windscreen wipers coupled with the pitter patter of raindrops on the roof. Snooze dreamily. (Er, aren't you meant to be racing? Ed.)

bollocks. I ain't never

airbags though, innit.

(Haw haw).

'eard it say nuffink. Nice

died of old age. Three

tharsand on the clock

Superb runabout.

Bargain. (Etc.)

But rallying is boring, isn't it?

As a TV spectator sport rallying, it has to be said, is a tad on the yawny side. The 'doing', however, is another thing altogether. It's you against the clock. You, on your own, against yourself. There are other cars, admittedly, but you never get to see them. (Just their times, at the end of each stage). With 28 stages, however, and with the constant need to fix any damage your car has









(Above) Look out Mr Anorak - I'm not gonna be able to stop so you'd better leggit, sharpish!

isn't it!" Haw haw!

Naaaah! I ain't posh.

An' this ain't neither.

but it goes some!

incurred en-route (within a given time), that's still a lot to be getting on with. However, Network Q adds more. Want a 'real' race? Then select the pertinent option. Now you'll start on a grid with a bunch of other cars. Their mission? To carve you up and piss you off. Want it harder? Then make the roads narrower (there are three settings). Harder still? Then select one of the five increasingly difficult 'arcade' options. It's the same gig, but this time there are timer checkpoints, and we all know what that means. (And, as far as I can make out, to succeed on the harder levels you need to be 'magic', like David Copperfield.)

The ultimate buzz however – and I know it's not too many people who are going to be able to experience it - is the 'office link-up'. Eight players on IPX. Rear-view mirrors containing detail to kill for. Argie bargie to the nth degree, and then some. Mind you, there's always the two player serial link up if you can be arsed to haul your kit to a chum's.

depending on the weather and type of you'll be driving on. This gives the game greater depth.

(Left) The sound and commentary are excellent. For example, when you drive in a blizzard you get that satisfying crunchy-cum squelch noise you get when you wear wellies in the snow. Coo!

(Above left) You can set

up your car and change

the brakes, suspension.

tyres, steering etc.

surface

Sega Rally? Screamer? Etc? The few comparisons that have to be

made are as follows... (Question) Is Network Q better than Sega Rally on the Saturn? (Answer) In the short-term maybe not, but in the long term, yes. (Question) Is it better than Screamer?

(Answer) For an instant 'buzz', no; but for the long haul, easily.

speed in telephone

numbers and more

Chapperal. Gizzit!

horses than The High

to know? It's a fackin'

motor! Top joyriders

nick nuffink else!

Cossie, ain't it. A geezer's

(Question) What about F1GP2? (Answer) Er, no, it isn't. But then again, they're such completely different 'sports' that it's hard to make direct comparisons. (Question) Need For Speed?

(Answer) I'd say they were almost equal and I absolutely love Need For Speed, so that's quite a compliment.

So there you go. Just look at the screenshots and ask yourself whether or not you love pissing about in cars. If the answer is 'yes', and your computer passed the bench-test mentioned earlier, then I suggest you pop t'shop. Z

Tech specs

Memory: 8Mb Processor: DX2/66

Graphics: VGA/SVGA

Sound: SoundBlaster and compatibles

Controls: Keyboard, joystick, wheel & pedals

Score

An excellent driving game. If it had on-coming traffic and coppers à la Need For Speed it would have scored 150 trillion.

Price: £39.99 Release Date: Out now **Publisher:** Europress Tel: 01625 859333

The People's



What's hard, hot, and throbs between your legs? Charlie Brooker knows, and he's sitting on one right now. Indulging in a heavy bout of fisting. An indefensibly pornographic way of introducing *Road Rash*? Write in and let us know...

shoved that stick

(Above Left) "Put that bloody stick down." (Bottom left) VW camper action!

(Right) It's CHiPs

in my spokes."





Road Rash 95



T BLOODY LAST. THIS 32-BIT update of the Mega Drive classic (having been available on the 3Do

and Playstation for some time) finally puts in a long overdue appearance on the PC. And blow me off if it isn't a darn fine conversion too – smoother and faster than the others.

Aside from the new highresolution

option (which ran like a *dream* on the P133 I tested it on), it also finds room for the one option the console versions sorely lacked – a multi-player link-up mode. The game itself sees you donning leathers and competing in a series of illegal motorbike races across America. So far, so dull – but the main twist with *Road Rash* is that you can *assault* the other riders during the contest. Punch them in the face, kick them into the path of on-coming cars, smack them in



Tech specs

lemory: 8Mb

Processor: 486/DX2

Graphics: VGA

Sound: SoundBlaster and compatibles

Controls: Keyboard, mouse and joystick

Note: Windows 95 only. Direct 3D supported

the mouth with a bloody big truncheon – it's all part of the fun.

If you actually manage to finish a race in one piece, or even win it, you'll be rewarded with some dosh which you can use to upgrade your bike. This means that you'll (supposedly) be more competitive and win more races. The only thing is, as you get better, the tracks get more twisty and turny and your opponents start to get even nastier. It's all pretty standard stuff, but that's the beauty of this kind of game: you can just stick it in your cp drive and play it

for a quick
fix, or sit
in for an
evening
and try to
work your
way through
a full season.

Bloody tricky
Aside from the racing

opposition, there are other fun diversions (such as mowing down pedestrians and bludgeoning the occasional police officer) and some bloody tricky courses. The downside? Clumsy sound effects and the odd ropey sprite, poor in-game music (why you can't listen to the 'big name' rock tracks which accompany

and the odd ropey sprite, poor in-game music (why you can't listen to the 'big name' rock tracks which accompany the menu system during the action itself is beyond me), and no bloody rear-view mirror. You'll be too busy kicking the shite out of all and sundry to care about any of that, mind. Z



She done me wrong

Since this is the 1990s and not the 890s, women are allowed to take part in violent, amoral motorbike races. Hence the female competitors who cropup in Road Rash.

Now, call me a hand-wringing wuss, but I've always felt a little uneasy abou games in which you can beat up female characters, and I tend to subconsciousl go 'easy' on them a bit. Until, that is, I noticed that one of the *Road Rash* girls has got the same name as *my 'ex* Suddenly, the game was transformed into an exercise in ferocious therapeutic psychodrama, as I vented my suppressed anger by knocking her silly with a truncheon, kicking her into trees, and belting her sideways into oncoming traffic, again and again and again. Every time she fell off, I stopped the bike and waited for her to catch up before unleashing yet more

What she'd think if she could see mindulging in this sad virtual revenge is anyone's guess – but let's face it, she's probably too busy shagging her way through a long line of blokes who are better looking, richer, and more welladjusted than me to even care. Still, I ain't missing her at all. Since she's begone. Away. No, I ain't missing her at all. No matter what my friends say. (Have you been drinking? – Ed.)

Score



Price: £34.99 Release Date: Out now Publisher: Electronic Arts
Tel: 01753 549 442



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Douglas Adams author of The Hitch-hikers Guide to the Galaxy.

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Flight Sim 95 PC ZUNE CLASSIC





We asked Simon Bradley I he'd check out the latest incarnation in the best-selling Flight Sim series. Well, it seemed liked good idea at the time. what with him being a proper' pilot and everything.

HE MICROSOFT FLIGHT SIMULATORS are the best-selling flight sims of all time. Now that doesn't really mean a whole lot, 'cos wek in the '80s the Honda Superdream the best selling bike, but it was Ill crap. People bought it because it d everything they wanted adequately, and it started every time they pressed button. What does this have to with Flight Sim 95? Well, I make living in the wacky and exciting wrld of computers, and that means hat, like many of my peers, my elings towards Microsoft are at best ambivalent and at worst positively hostile. You see, nobody



(Above) Now that's what I call a cockpit.

(Below) "'Ere 'Chelle! Look at that great big plane up there, it looks like it's going to crash! Wait 'til I tell Arfur back at the Vic."

likes a smartarse, and that's the trouble with Microsoft. They're just so bloody good at everything that it gets really irritating after a while and that rather sums up their Flight Simulator series annoyingly competent. FS95 is no exception. It does everything you could reasonably ask, and is the ideal way to get into flight sims

if you don't want to shoot at anything. But is this enough? Read on, and I'll tell you.

Departure lounge

Way back in the dim and distant past, somebody at Microsoft decided that after folks had worked using their products, they should relax using their products. And so FS1 was born, to somewhat mixed reviews. Well, to no reviews actually because there were no magazines reviewing PC games then, but you know what I mean. It was hardly an unqualified success, it flew like a turkey, looked crap and didn't have any sound card support. But people still bought it, and working on the Hollywood Principle, Microsoft released a sequel with the snappy title of FS2. In true Rocky style, this continued through FS3 and FS4 to FS5, which at least was fairly up to date, and now FS95. Over this time (about 12 years I guess), the thing has got rather better. It got tweaked so that it behaved like an aeroplane rather than an arcade game. It got tuned so that it looked better (EGA begat vga begat svga etc.) It introduced sound card support. In short, it matured into the proper, well-rounded fellow













it is today. On the way, as mentioned earlier, it became the best selling flight sim of all time. By quite a long way. Now to be fair, that is partly because it gets bundled with the new machines sold these days. Nevertheless, it's still pretty impressive.

Duty frees

The latest incarnation – Flight Sim 6 (or Microsoft Flight Simulator for Windows 95 to give it its 'proper' title) – is a bangup-to-date bells and whistles simulator. No surprises there. There is full sound support, pretty well any video mode you care to mention, and support for any joystick which Windows 95 is happy with. Superficially at least, it makes the grade without any problems. In fact, it looks quite stunning – check out the screen shots for yourself.

One good thing about Microsoft – they integrate their products properly. The installation routine is a breeze and there are no surprises lurking for the unwary traveller. At least not at first. As usual, you need to leave the cD in to run the game – try it without and it sulks. Which makes me wonder why you need 90MB of disk space as well...

In-flight movie

So what do you get for your dosh? Well, for a start, you get a cp. At this stage, I don't know what else, because the jury is still out on what will be printed and what will be on-line. But my money is





(Above) "Blimey! Old Heseltine's company car gets more extravagant every year!"

(Left) The Extra stunt plane, or 'vomit plane' as it's more commonly known.



(Left) Feel free as a bird high above the clouds in your little Cessna.

(Below) "Ere Reg. I think we're about to run out of runway!"



In Perspective

A bit of a tricky comparison, this one.

ht Unlimited

Flight Simulator 5

Flight Simulator 95

Marine Fighters ('cos it's a got Hercules in it)

on a lightweight box, lots of dire licence and copyright warnings and the CD with everything else there. But don't worry the on-line help is very good. You get the typical polished Microsoft installation routine and the sure and certain knowledge that the product will work with Windows 95 and probably perform okay as well. But more on that later.....

So. You've installed it. You've set up your controls, preferences and so on. You've hit the button marked Fly Now! There will be a short delay before normal service is resumed - probably only a few seconds, and then there you'll be, in whatever glorious detail you've selected, on the threshold at Chicago O'Hare airport in a Cessna 185. Familiar? You bet. From here on in, if you have ever seen a release of Flight Simulator, then you'll know the score. Controls are the same. Key presses are the same. The flight model is pretty much the same. Is that a bad thing? Not necessarily. After all, I haven't heard too many complaints about the way that FS3 handles, and on the basis that if it ain't broke don't fix it, Microsoft have done the smart thing and left well alone.

Of course, no new release would be a new release without new features. In this case, allow me to introduce you to a couple of new aircraft. On the left, looking sort of shiny and cute, is the Extra 300s – beloved of anyone who has tried *Flight Unlimited* as being the easiest thing there not to kill yourself in. On the right, looking sort of shiny and, well, bulbous actually, is the Boeing 737-400. Yes, that's right. You went in



ne going to Lanzagrotty, and now you an pretend to be Captain Clueless and ee if you too can bounce so hard that the in-flight meals go from omelettes to outflés in one fell swoop.

(Right) General aircraft detailing is very high, even if the landscape isn't. But who cares about detailed ground texture maps when you're whizzing













(Right) General aircraft detailing is very high, even if the landscape Reheated breakfast But there's more. Oh yes, the state of the servery shades of the servery shades.

through the air in a

Lear jet at 10,000 feet?

(Left) There are now six

wonderfully modelled

aircraft to choose from,

including the Camel

and 737; each with

and official blurb.

accurate flight models

(Below) You can switch

views and even aircraft

during flight(!) to make

things more interesting.

But there's more. Oh yes, there's more. Take a look at the screen shots to see how much more. No longer do you need to buy third-party add-ons to get decent graphics. Now you can fly over Detroit and see the queues of broken down North West Airlines DC-10s waiting to fly to Gatwick (not that I'm bitter or anything), you can fly over Paris and almost smell the garlic. Heck, you can even cross the Channel and pop into Heathrow if you want and most important of all, it is quite possible to navigate your way by reference to the scenery. You can call me Mr Sad if you wish, (We do already



don't we? - Ed.) but to prove a point I took my Learjet (hey, I can dream, can't I?) out from Charles de Gaulle in Paris, set a course of 340°, crossed the French coast somewhere in Normandy, crossed the British coast around Brighton, flew North up the M23, past Gatwick, across the M25, into London, turned left at the Thames and crashed just short of Heathrow's runway 25L. By this time it was early in the morning, you see, and I was somewhat bleary-eyed and not a little fed up with the journey. But more on this phenomenon later. Anyway, the point is that you really can navigate using no more than your Family Atlas, a compass and a lot of patience. Unless it gets dark, of course, in which case you're just a little buggered. Although of course you can still fall back on the VOR/DME which, if you've read the manual and if you know the frequencies will give you a perfect position fix every time. And a course. But those are big 'if's.

The last version of Flight Simulator I experienced was somewhat challenged when it came to weather. Basically, there was either an awful lot (the ping pong ball effect) or there was none at all. This is no longer a problem. You don't get the wacky fluffy clouds which some of the very latest offerings present, but what you do get is the facility to totally customise your







weather. And pretty good it looks too, although when you actually get up to a cloud you can see that in fact it's squarer than it looks from a distance. But now I'm nitpicking. You want rain? Okay. How about fog? You got it. Thunder and lightning? You bet. Wild crosswinds? No problemo. Hey, you could even combine all of them, just to see how good you are. Well, do ya feel lucky, punk?

So, what do we have in total? Well, you get six aircraft - the ubiquitous Cessna, the original Camel, the luxurious Learjet, the hooligan Extra, the silent Schweitzer sailplane and the ludicrous 737. You get weather. Lots of it. You get scenery, again lots of it. Detailed too. You get a pretty good flight model - I've flown Cessnas, Schweitzers and a 737 (yes, really) and this is actually quite good. What you don't get is anything to shoot at, although some of the preset 'adventure' flights included are actually quite good for adrenaline flow.

Short finals

A word about frame rate and processor power. This needs Windows 95, so don't try it on your 386, children. But be prepared for a shock. On max everything, it still runs okay on a P133 with lots of RAM and a decent video card. Basically, go with the setting it suggests for detail and display, and you'll be fine regardless of what you are running on. Which makes a change these days. Out of interest, just try running Flight Sim 5 on a Pentium and watch it fly (ahem!).

In customs

I really didn't expect to like this at all. Although I genuinely get excited by flight (yeah, I know, sad bloke), and love aircraft, I tend towards the opinion that if I want to fly from London to Glasgow in real-time then I may as well do it for real, watch a movie, get some free nibbles, see Glasgow (!) and have a bit



Duncan's view

Er, I always find these Microsoft Flight Sim doofers hard to 'judge' fairly. They do what they 'do' excellently, but the point is whether or not you, the player, want to join in: as Simon said. rather than 'pretend' to fly in real-time from London to Glasgow, you'd be better off doing it for real. (Then again, if you did that you'd actually find yourself in Glasgow, so maybe it is best to pretend.) It's all bordering on the edge of sad cliff though, at the end of the day. You know? And I hate the silly keyboard commands, and the poncey, confusing and ugly Windows stuff. And the graphics, these days, aren't exactly 'cutting edge'. Mind you, they do have their moments - apart from when you crash, and that just looks downright stoopid! (Still, the kind of people FS95 is aimed at will probably never crash, and so will never know.) For my part I reckon Simon's been a bit over-generous with the score. Having said that, however, I can't think of another game that allows you to literally install the whole world on your hard-drive, so maybe he hasn't. Erm...

(Above left) If you can't fly, then get the on-board instructor to teach you.

(Left) Fly to an airport anywhere in the world and then crash!



(Left) Clouds and weather are now much better implemented.

(Below) Oh for a nachine gun and a couple of sticks of dynamite!





of a life rather than sit in front of the PC and do it 'virtually'. Having said that though, I was pleasantly surprised by the depth of this sim. You really can get quite into it, and immerse yourself in the experience. Then suddenly it's midnight. Or dawn. It just depends on how far you're flying and what you want to do

Would I buy it? To be honest, yes I would, because although this is not the type of flight sim I would normally play around with (I like shooting things you see), I found myself hopelessly addicted to the thing despite myself. Lots of other folks will buy it too, and not just because it comes from Microsoft either. It really is rather good. It looks nice. It flies well. It even sounds good. And, being objective, you can't really ask much more than that, can you? Z

Tech specs

Memory: 8Mb (16Mb pref) Processor: 486DX/33 (P75 recommended)

Sound: Sound Blaster, Ad-Lib. Roland Controls: Joystick, Rudders, Mouse, Keyboard

Score



Price: £49.99 Release Date: TBC

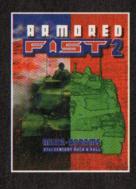
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CPZ2610BA Customer Interface,

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QUESTION:

We originally gave this game to David Coulthard to review, but he kept spinning the mouse off the mouse mat. Duncan MacDonald had to take over, and frankly he's not much better...

FilManager



WANT TO GET INTO THIS REVIEW AS quickly as possible, because there's so much to say. Nevertheless, I must share with you a snippet of conversation overheard on a bus, a few days after it was announced that Damon Hill's contract wasn't going to be renewed...

London bloke: I reckin 'e should of told 'em 'e weren't gonna do no more races. Scottish bloke: Uh? Wha'? Who? Frunk

London bloke: Naaah, Damien, Damien. I reckon 'e should of left straight off an' set up his own team. That would of done 'im praaad ('Proud' - Ed.) 'E could of beaten 'em all!

Scottish bloke: Aye, bu' heed huv tae buy humsel' a car, wouldnae-ee! Un' there'sh tha mechunics, tae!

London bloke: So wot? 'E's a millionaire, innit. Woss yor problem?

Oh, were life so simple. Unfortunately it's not. And neither is F1 Manager.

F1 Manager begins with a fairly simple premise: take over an existing team or start a new one - building from scratch, with a hefty bank loan. It's simply a matter of clicking on one of the icons.

Then you get to type in your name (ie 'Damien Hill'). And then the team name (ie 'Damien Racing').



(Above) Getting your

car set-up right is dead

important. Just ask

the Arrows team.

(Above right) If your drivers ask for too much money, then sack them. It's the car that wins you races not the driver. Erm... No! I think vou're wrong there.



(Left) You can view the race from numerous trackside cameras. This makes it a bit more interesting than the other F1 management games

Then it gets hard

You're in an office - a static screen and just about anywhere you point to with the mouse offers up a 'hotspot'. Click on it and off you're whisked, to another static screen, which, in turn, has further hotspots. And so on, All you really want to do is buy a car and go to a race, but you're stuck in a mind loop. Time to read the manual.

Two days later...

Now you can navigate deftly through the 'suity' part of the game: balance sheets, regulations, dates, banks, sponsors, contracts, statistics, negotiations, merchandising, and so on. Then it's time to put on the overalls (hoorah) and zip through R&D, design, production, assembly and the like. Finally (like a year later) you can actually go and race.

In-car views, trackside cameras, and on and on. Send your cars out to test, bring them back in, fiddle with fuel, wings and even parts and then send them out again. Then comes qualifying day... be careful with fuel loads, and maybe even use that special 'qualifying engine' you put together back home. (So what if it's knackered after 12 laps?). Then, as long as you've got your cars back together in time, it's time for the Big Day: watch your bitmapped vehicles zooming round the vectored track from several viewpoints, in real-time. (Or, indeed, from a speeded-up crap-o-map doofer, should you become bored). You can do your own pitstops, incidentally, with the mouse pointer. Win or lose, however, and it's time to return to home base: hot-spot city, 'Suit' mode, 'Overalls' mode. 'Suit' mode again. Etc.

How can I cram this in?

Erm, there's so much more to say. I'd better quickly add, then, that an important part of F1 Manager is the 'pseudo CAD' screen. Design your own car parts, basically (sort of). And then, um, er... actually I'm really confused to be honest. All the F1 management games to date have been confusing, and this one is no exception. The emphasis, for me, seems a little too orientated on the 'resources' side of things. I can do without that crap, personally, but maybe that's just me. F1 Manager is, however, beautifully put together, which augers well for the interior workings of the code.



You know? Put it like this: my drivers are doing terribly and my office staff are really pissed off, yet I have to assume the problem is due to my pathetic management skills rather than the game itself. In other words I'm crap, and it isn't. Or I hope it isn't, especially as I'm about to make it a 'benchmark'. I'll confidently state that F1 Manager is the best of the genre to date - no problems there - but as to whether it'll remain as such for ages, I'm not so sure. 7

Tech specs

Memory: 8Mb

Processor: 486/66

Graphics: SVGA/Vesa compatible driver

Sound: SoundBlaster

Controls: Mouse, keyboard

Score

If this was a torture machine it'd be called the 'confuse-otron'. It's pretty skill, though, even if it is a German product. (The bastards.)

Price: £39.99 Release Date: Out now Publisher: Europress Tel: 01625 859 444



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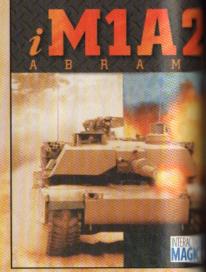


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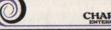


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CHARYBDIS



Privateer 2: The Darkening

All good things come to an end, even the long-running Wing Commander versus X-Wing debate, at least as far as Chris Anderson s concerned.

ET'S GET A COUPLE OF THINGS straight before this review commences proper. I am sure you will all be amazed to learn at Privateer 2 is the sequel to Privateer 1. no - Ed.) Privateer 1 used the Wing nander game engine (and had some ding bits in as well). There are lots of ople out there who get violently sick you are stupid enough to say the ords 'Wing

involuntary vom-fest they will then start bombarding you with reasons why X-Wing is soooo much better until eventually you want to smash their faces in. Thankfully, I am now in a position to unite both sides of this silly argument during the course of this review. How do I intend to perform this miracle? Well, actually, I don't have to do much at all, because those lovely people at Electronic Arts have brought a brand new team of programmers on board for The Darkening, all of whom are big X-Wing fans (cue thousands of X-wing fans applauding 'til their little hands fall off, bless 'em).

As you would expect, the aforementioned programming bods have brought their love of the X-Wing games with them. The upshot of all this is The

Darkening now has combat scenes that have more in common with X-Wing than the original Wing Commander game, yet still retain enough of their own identity to set them apart from X-Wing. (Thank God he put that bit in - PC Zone lawyers.) Actually, that last bit is not as much of a cop-out as it may sound, because



(Above & right) The Darkening is a bit of a graphical feast, innit?







(Above) All the menus

and interfaces are

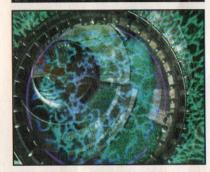
pretty smart. In fact.

(Left) Got 'im! Nasty

they ooze gloss.

big alien bast!





« graphically, The Darkening just happens to blow every single action game I've ever seen on PC right out the window. Let me explain..



Bye bye bitmaps

creation

which

has

Duncan McDonald was looking over my shoulder as I was playing The Darkening. He took one look at the game and the first thing he said was "They've got rid of those bloody bitmappy ships at last" or words to that effect. Every single ship in The Darkening universe (and there are loads) is a gorgeous-looking

seen in ages. Check out the screenshots and you will see what I mean: sexy polygonised ships in a lovely dark and surreal universe populated by... (Er, I think we get the gist - Ed.) What you won't get

In Perspective

As you can see from the chart below,

The Darkening is the new game to be

Privateer

X-Wing

reckoned with as far as space combat

sims go. Unlike X-Wing, which is the new game not to be reckoned with (snigger).

> from the screen shots is how amazing

everything looks when it's moving around. lovingly designed on the Take it from me, it's fab. So, no probs on the planet Polygon. Out are presentation front, what bitmaps, in are polygons, praise be the Lord and all that happy about the rest of it? Come on kiddies, it's time to have horseshit. It is generally agreed by all in a look at the game... the PC Zone office that this game is the

most visually impressive thing we have It's bigger, it's better, it's...

...er, a bit like Privateer 1 actually, except as I said, everything in the game has been given an overhaul. The graphics are gorgeous, the combat's fantastic you really feel as though you're 'out there' in space shooting it out with pirates and other such baddies. The special effects are truly awesome too: the light-sourcing effects as you blast enemy ships are mind-blowing, and scarily realistic lens-flare effects add

of the game is the same as it was the first time around: you play a lone (or dishonest) living out of either trading or beating the crap out of paths are equally satisfying, though I would like to point out that if you're whizzing around the galaxy doing for profit, you are likely to be called a bloody big wuss by daring, dashing, trouble-making space bods like myself. But don't let that put you off, eh?



If you've played any of the Elite games, ou'll pretty much know the score with his kind of game: buy a ship (which crap to start with), do some trading, ake on a few easy missions, make ome cash, buy a new ship, and then through the whole rigmarole all ver again, at the same time gaining reputation for yourself as a 'wellhard' dude, so you can charge more money for your future exploits. In The Parkening, you can do all these things. However, if you're the type of chap (or (hapess) who likes a bit of purpose to their inter-galactic comings and oings, you might want to get involved the 'big plot'.

The big what?

The plot, morons, didn't you know that all these 'epic' space combat things have to have a big plot? Well anyway, The Darkening's it is too (see separate panel). To get yourself involved in the big plot, you need to speak to a certain character at the beginning of the game. If you don't know who he is, then you'll be stuffed as far as



the bloke you want. Then pop off to

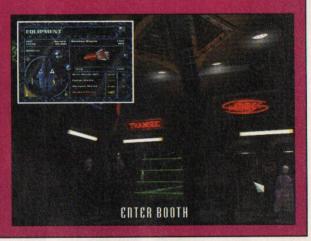
got one and bloody good the plot's concerned, except you won't because I'm going to tell you who he is. I'm good like that. Check out Public Records in the Booth at he beginning of the game and find a ecord pertaining to Dr Loomis. He's



Each planet has a Booth, which you can pop into and buy and sell commodities, purchase a new ship, upgrade your weapons, and get info on people, places, and companies from the Public Records. Pay special attention to the Public Records, as info here points you in the right direction if you're following the 'big plot'.

WHO, WHY, WHERE, WHAT?

he object of the game is to find out who you are. It's not like you've forgotten or anything. it's just that your ship has crash-landed at a pace-station, you've gone into a coma, and when you wake up you have no clue who you are anymore. Except you know your name is Ser Lev Arris. All the blokes in the game are called Ser something, it's sort of futuristicspeak for 'mister'. And all the women are called Serus something, it's like 'missus'. I'm sure you can see the pattern that's developing here. Anyway, the idea is that you follow all the clues about your ill-fated space-ship and you'll ind out who you are, what you've done, and all kinds of other interesting things like that.



(Left) This is your interstellar map. Don't see him at Crius and hey presto you're worry if you break sorted - you've done it, you're in the down, just ring the big plot. This will take you off on an intergalactic AA and they'll turn up in a

> (Below left) The game is full of interestin' characters to befriend and stitch up.

vellow space ship

and sort you out.

incredibly interesting adventure which you can follow for the whole game and see through to its natural conclusion. Am I good to you lot or what?

In conclusion

The Darkening is by far and away the best space combat sim ever to grace the PC. The graphics are jaw-droppingly gorgeous, the action's fast, furious and bloody satisfying, the plot's rich and beautifully told, the acting's impressive for the most part, and basically the experience is quite breath-taking. Oh yeah, and it pisses all over X-Wing. What more can I say? Buy it. Buy it now. Z

Tech specs

Memory: 8Mb RAM

Processor: P75 (P100 recommended)

Graphics: VGA/SVGA

Sound: SoundBlaster

Controls: Keyboard, mouse, joystick

Score



Not only outrageously goodlooking, but also incredibly addictive to boot.

Price: £TBC Release Date: Out now Publisher: EA Tel: 01753 549442





Movie madness?

EA spent five million dollars on this game, and most of it went on producing the interactive movie bits that pop up everywhere to impress you or take you on to the next bit of the plot. We went on and on about this in The Darkening supplement we ran last issue, enthusing wildly about how cool it was probably going to be. Well, I'm not going to repeat everything here, but let's just say that as far as I'm concerned it was money well spent. The story-line is damned engrossing, which of course is no less than you would expect from an Origin game, and the acting is of a very high standard throughout. Well okay, some of the scenes are a bit cheesy but then that sort of adds to the movielike feel of the whole thing, doesn't it? (No - Ed.) Shut up, I like it. It's got Christopher Walken in it, and Clive Owen, and Matilda May, and David Warner, and bloody loads of other famous people too. At the end of the day, it's going to come down to personal taste as to whether you like the movie sections of the game or not. Some people are bound to say "bloody hell they spent all that money on those crap movie bits". Well look at it this way: the actual in-game parts of The Darkening are f***ing brilliant, and if you like the movie bits too, it's an unexpected bonus, non? So cynics be silent and accept The Darkening for what it is:



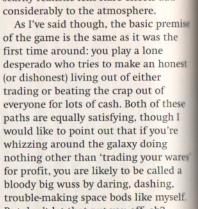












(Left) Super detailed hi-res graphics mean its Privateer: The Jerking on anything less than a beefy Pentium when the onscreen action heats up.

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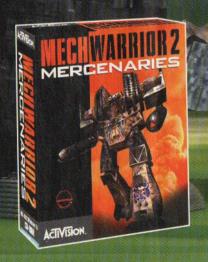
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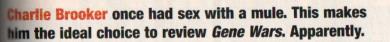




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Gene Wars





es I DID. REALLY. HONESTIX. I HAD sex with a mule. Several mules, in fact. But it's okay – I did it for the good of mankind. It was part of a genetics experiment. There was this bunch of scientists, see, and they wanted to breed this sort of mule-human hybrid. My job was to go down to the fields and try to entice the mules back to a special 'love nest' they'd constructed for me in their laboratory.

Have you ever tried chatting up a mule? Let me tell you, it isn't easy. There aren't many suggestive conversational gambits which revolve around eating grass or having a tail, and if you start coming on too strong they just gallop away, leaving you forlorn and alone in the moonlight. And despite what that Toyah Wilcox says on her sex programme thing, mules are not good lovers. They're distant and uncommunicative, and to be quite frank, entirely selfish whenever things



get physical. Anyway, I jacked it all in when I discovered that the scientists had set up a hidden camera in the room and were broadcasting the entire proceedings (complete with a 'zany' musical soundtrack) nightly via satellite onto Spanish national television, where apparently I was known as 'Señor Mule-o Bumbal' and was developing quite a following.

But I digress. I'm not just wittering on about mules, sex and genetic experiments because I wanted to write a spurious and offensive opening paragraph (I was going to do that anyway), no - I'm mentioning these things because they're all part and parcel of Gene Wars, the new action strategy game from Bullfrog. Now this is a bit of a high-concept product here, so pin your lugholes back and put your very best 'understanding' hat on as I explain just what on earth the game is about. As game plots go, this is probably the most interesting one you'll ever hear (not the most enticing come-on, I know - but bear with me)...



Okay. We're humans, right, and we've gone out and explored space and discovered that – shock horror – we are not alone. There are other lifeforms in the galaxy. Intelligent lifeforms which are more or less on a par with us.



You'll need to fill this area with lifeforms to please the Ethereals. That's one of them there — looking a lot like Casper The Friendly Ghost.

(Left) A blossoming base. Note British-style workmen, standing around doing sod all.

(Far bottom left) The team touch down on a virgin planet.

(Below) Suck up to the Ethereals enough and they'll place a monolith near your base. Any creatures or specialists touching it will be blessed with 'special powers'. Anyway, after an initial period of nervy introductions and much conjecture over which race had the biggest genitals, we (and they) gave in to our basest instincts and started an all-out intergalactic, inter-species war. And a very destructive war it was too, with bountiful, beautiful planets being burnt to cinders all over the shop.

This mass destruction soon attracted the attention of the Ethereals, an ancient race of weird beings with awesome, God-like powers. They'd built the galaxy billions and billions of years ago and were none too impressed with the way we'd vandalised it. Using their omnipotent powers, they punished the guilty parties (ie us and the other races) by forcing them to take part in a sort of universal community service programme – to visit barren planets and turn them back into lush green hives of biological wonderment again. Planting trees, breeding animals,



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balancing the food chain that sort of thing. So far, so good. Then our new masters decided to introduce a bit of competition. They split us into teams and told us that whichever group proved to be most efficient would receive a prize. And the rest? They'd have their brains fried.

Which is where the game comes in...

Absolutely. Because we all know that the best way to win is to play dirty. But unfortunately, the Ethereals won't let you. You're not allowed to commit acts of violence or cunning sabotage. If they spot you doing anything bad, they'll penalise you. Because you should know better.

Yes... you should know better. But as for dumb animals... they're different. If you breed a gigantic great crab, and it wanders off and snips an opponent's head off with its pincers, that's not your fault. And if your pack of little donkeys, bred accidentally back at the lab, goes and eats your opponent's freshly-planted forest, well, it's just nature's way, isn't it? Likewise, if - in the name of research - you happen to breed an entirely new species of animal, and it turns out to be unbelievably violent and easily led, shucks, that's evolution. Right?

Starting to get the picture? It's Command & Conquer meets Sim Life, basically. Loads of resource management (with a distinctly eco-friendly bent) and loads of real-time war strategy (with a distinctly eco-unfriendly bent). Aside from the gene-shuffling twist, there's another novel idea here - the Ethereals themselves show up periodically throughout each level, observing the action for themselves and keeping an eye out for any wrong-doing. Whenever



(Above) You'll need to plant acres of forest near your base. Not only does it provide food for the beasties, it can also be recycled and used

of each level you're handed this 'ready reckoner' so you can see exactly how well (or not) you've done.

(Below) Like C&C, the

landscape is 'drawn

in' as you venture out

suspense, doesn't it?

into it. Adds to the

for villainous purposes. (Above right) At the end

> they're around, you'll have to be on your best behaviour. As soon as they've buggered off again, anything goes. It's rather like trying to pass rude notes around at the back of the maths

It's anything but simple. There's an unbelievable amount of things to try and keep track of - from what type of seeds your botanist is carrying to whether or not your mules feel like mating with your frogs - not to mention the fact that your opponents tend to be both ruthless and uncommonly alert. It's rather like playing C&C, Theme Park, and Sim Earth, all at once. Against a complete bastard. At first, the sheer number of decisions that need making all at the same time is frustrating, annoying even - especially since the learning curve suddenly turns into a sheer rock face somewhere around level five. But persevere and you'll find that





Tech specs

Memory: 8Mb

Processor: 486DX66

Graphics: SVGA

Sound: All major sound cards

Controls: Mouse

class every time Mr Steelnuts turns his back.

its worth it. I'm finding it incredibly tough, but I can't help going back for more. Z took Command & Conquer, speeded up its action segments and simplified the resource management. Gene Wars kicks both elements into overdrive. Get the picture?

Good Game, Good Game

Not that I'm saying it's a C&C beater, however. This game isn't going to be everybody's cup of tea, simply because it's so frenetically complicated. If you've read thus far, and you're thinking "I like the sound of that", then rest assured - you'll love it. Those of you who prefer their games a tad more neanderthal had better leave it alone. It might piss you off and then you'd want to swing a club at it or something.

Oh, and by the way. The presentation, graphics, animation, and sound effects (a sort of hallucinatory blend of Fraggle Rock and '50s sci-fi) are by far and away the best I've ever seen or heard in a game of this type. And yes, there is a multi-player mode. Just thought I'd mention it. 7

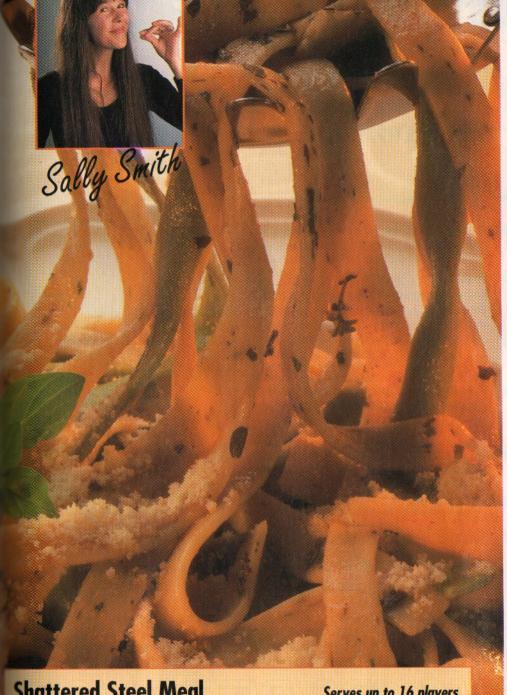
Score



and completely off its tits. Price: £39.99 Release Date: October

Publisher: EA/Bullfrog

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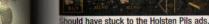
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THE MOTHER OF ALL SHOOT'EMI-UPS RETURNS





PICKRAIX





After a month away, the Pick 'N' Mix section returns. Those of you familiar with this part of the mag will know that usually it's crammed to bursting point with uninspiring B-list releases. This month, however, things are different. Why? Because this month's selection is actually rather good. Excellent news for everyone except Charlie Brooker, who was looking forward to slagging a few things off.

MONSTER TRUCK MADNESS



N WHICH MICROSOFT, THE PEOPLE WHO THRILLED you with Excel v4.3, Word 6.0, and the spinetingling Access Developer's Kit bring you the next logical addition to their range: a monster truck racing simulator. In case you're unaware exactly what monster truck racing is, allow me to explain. Sadly there aren't any actual monsters in it, just trucks with absurdly large wheels. They drive around a course

ramps, haybales etc), trying to ram their opponents off the road at the same time. It's the spectator sport of choice for men who drink beer, have a large gut, a checked shirt and a dusty old baseball cap, shout "vee-haw" a lot, and are married to their own sister. You know the type. Red-necked hicks.

Anyway, this computerised version is startlingly good entertainment. Part Stunt Car Racer and part Nascar Racing, it's blessed with impressive visuals, loads of 3D polygons being thrown around efficiently, trucks that are fun to drive, and several well thought-out courses. The three or four of you with 3D accelerator cards are catered for too (thanks to the Direct 3D support). And it doesn't end there, because network play is also supported - and it's no doubt a bloody good laugh, too. In fact, I can only think of one main drawback to the game: the commentator is an absolute tosser (although you can always switch him off).

Overall-it's robust, amiable, undemanding fun - just the sort of thing to take your mind off things during a marathon Excel spreadsheet-editing session. If you're



looking for proof that Microsoft's gaming division are beginning to get their act together, look no further.

Publisher: Microsoft Tel: 01734 270001 Internet: www.microsoft.com Price: £44 99 Note: Windows 95 required

SCORE: 78

INSIDE INDEPENDENCE DAY

PACE INVADERS: THE MOVIE (AKA ID4) HAS been playing in every cinema on the planet for long enough now, so the chances are you've seen it at least once already. Assuming you have an appetite for cheeseball (yet admittedly tongue-in-cheek) gungho Americanisms, it's a great film, but one that's been



rammed down our throats, hype-wise, since it arrived Furthermore, at the time of writing, it's impossible to switch on Sky Movies, ITV, or The Sci-Fi Channel without being confronted by countless plugs, clips, and exclusive interviews with the stars. I don't know about you, but if I see that footage of the White House exploding one more bloody time, I'm going to go round to 20th Century Fox headquarters and make their vision a very bloody reality.

Inside Independence Day is a loathsome and cynical piece of back-slapping Hollywood masturbation designed to cheat gullible sci-fi diehards out of the few pennies they have left (having already forked out for a whole range of shoddy spin-off material, from ID4 T-shirts to personal colonic irrigation kits with Will Smith's grinning face on the cover). Not only is this insulting (it has the audacity to feature adverts for the dull-looking ID4 game), it's also shamefully amateurish in places - the amount of background noise during the interviews (ie shameless plugs) being a case in point. You know those 15-mile wide spaceships that hover



around in the movie? Well, I hope one of them flies up the arse of whichever greed-mongering corporate boy wonder commissioned this hateful chunk of sour, stale, shit-encrusted garbage.

Publisher: EA Tel: 01753 549442 Price: TBC Note: Windows 3.1/95, s.ound card required

SCORE: 0

MUPPET TREASURE ISLAND



Burning off the excess methane creates a handy light source

HE BIG MUPPETS COMEBACK CONTINUES with this point-and-click adaptation of their latest cinematic escapade. Its fair to say this is aimed squarely at young children and it's an immaculately designed slice of silliness which should have the little ones gurgling with joy within seconds.

The blend of integrated video and sumptuous hand-drawn backgrounds is altogether seamless, as Kermit, Fozzie, Gonzo and all the old favourites mug their way through easy-to-follow adventure sequences and quirkily humorous subgames; my favourite is the one which involves hurling gigantic fruit pies at the pirates. Billy Connolly even puts in a guest appearance and manages not to swear.

The one and only drawback is that game-wise it really is too simple for adults to play through, although having said that, it held my attention for ages (I even went back to do some of the games for a second time, sad sod that I am). Ultimately, Muppet Treasure Island is perfect for introducing the little ones to the life-enhancing joy of computer games, though. If you've got children, they may well grow up hating your guts unless you buy it for them. If you haven't got children, try and borrow some or, better still, start shagging now until you've got an excuse to bring home a copy. Got that?



The Swedish chef's new line in dill and herring pizza

Publisher: Activision
Tel: 0181-742 9400
Price: £34.99

Note: Windows 95 required

SCORE: 80

SANTA FE MYSTERIES: THE ELK MOON MURDER

GUPERIOR MULTIMEDIA MURDER-MYSTERY FUN from Activision. Some old bint's been shot in the head and it's down to you to bring her killer to justice and clean the carpet up afterwards. Which means interviewing suspects, collating evidence, and generally coming over all Angela Lansbury (I had to be careful how I put that).



ots of Native Americans and, er, Amanda Donohoe.

Amanda Donohoe pops up briefly and for once doesn't shed her clothes like autumn leaves. The review copy I was sent had the original American packaging which features a warning about "clothed sexual touching" on the front; an excellent enticement to purchase, and a good name for a band, too.

Anyway, although not a patch on *The Pandora Directive*, it's polished, professional, and fairly good fun, even if it does tend to lead you by the nose a bit; the fact that it's centred around the Native American community makes things a little more interesting too. Crime fiction fans who fancy getting on a Poirot trip could do far worse, in other words.



Anyone with a taste in jewellery like that deserves to die.

Publisher: Activision Tel: 0181-742 9400 Price: £29.99

Note: Windows 95/DOS required; 16-bit sound card required.

SCORE: 72

CRUSADER: NO REGRET



Regretfully similar to No Remorse.

EING, OBVIOUSLY, A SEQUEL TO *CRUSADER:*No Remorse. Since the words 'regret' and 'remorse' mean virtually the same thing, it's no great surprise to learn that this is almost the same game; a sort of real-time take on the *X:Com* games

(although nowhere near as good), starring a mercenary in a funky red combat suit with a nice line in Bodie-and-Doyle style rolling moves.

Now, thrill junkie that I am, I was really quite enamoured with the first *Crusader* game. Perhaps, in hindsight (having re-read my review of the time), over- enamoured but I don't have any desire to play the whole thing over again; especially since nowadays there are several similar, yet far superior games on the market (such as *Gender Wars, Syndicate Wars*, or *Bedlam*). In fact, aside from a few new animation routines (and the level layout), this sequel is so flatly similar to the original that it's really more akin to a bunch of data-disk add-on levels, and as such is of interest only to Origin completists (or, of course, Origin's financial department). Not very interesting at all, in other words. Wait for *X:Com Apocalypse*, instead – that's my advice, mate.

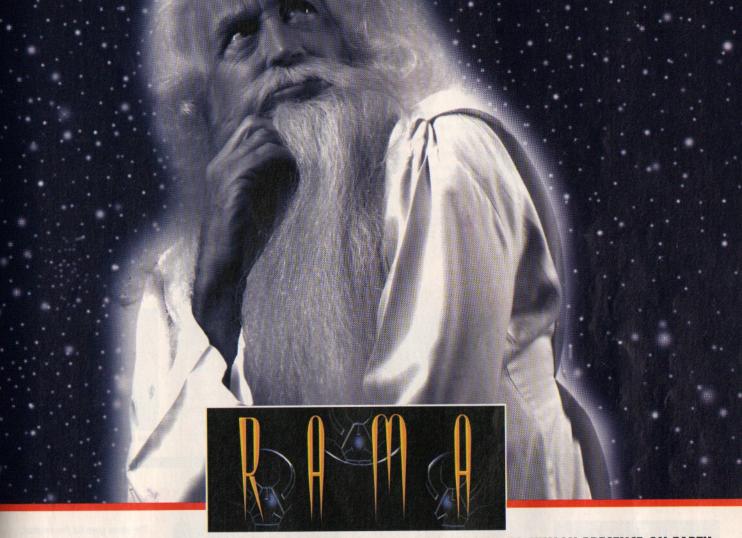


Not very interesting except for the funky red combat suits.

Publisher: EA/Origin Tel: 01753 549442 Internet: www.ea.com Price: TBC

SCORE: 60

IT throws up so many questions that even the most convinced people are beginning to doubt.



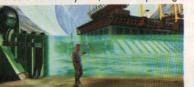
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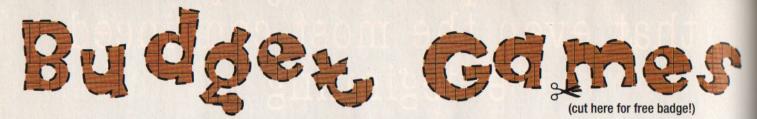


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It's here! Quake! Quake's out on budget! The full game for only £4.99!! ... Not really. But here are a load of compilations from Telstar, instead. You know you want them.

Theme Park/Strike Commander



game that ever gave you the chance to do all the things that real theme park owners do: design and build scary rides; hire people to die of heart attacks from walking about in chicken suits in 120° heat; put excess salt in your chips to make people thirsty; sell them extortionately priced drinks to quench it; make children vomit; play the stock market; take over the world.

Very strangely it's been matched with Strike Commander, a futuristic flight sim high in gung-ho values that had

good bits (cinematic sequences, good graphics and sound, varied missions) and less good bits (the flight model and running speed, although admittedly the speed should no longer be a problem on today's powerful Pentiums). Still, you have to question whether a die-hard strategy fan will be interested in messing with a two-year old flight sim. Who exactly are these packs aimed at?

Publisher: Telstar Price: £19.99

SCORE: 70



It's not EF2000, but hey, it's cheap.

Hi-Octane/Wing Commander II



Bullfrog lost the plot a bit with this one.

■ I-OCTANE IS THE ONLY Bullfrog game not to hit the punters like a head-on collision between a supertanker and Russell Grant in a diving suit. It's okay, but hardly stunning: a fast, violent driving game that uses the Magic Carpet engine (which is why people slagged it: you can't see far enough in front of you). It doesn't match the latest arcade racers.

Wing Commander 2 was the first game in the Wing series to have reasonably hi-res graphics, but loses out in my opinion to the vastly superior X-Wing

titles. The Darkening is the first game in the Wing series to really boot X-Wing into touch (see the review in this issue). but WCII didn't cut it then and doesn't now. I can't really recommend this compilation to any of you unless you're nuts about Wing III and IV and want a taste of what the series was like before Mark Hamill came into the picture.

Publisher: Telstar Price: £19.99

SCORE: 50



It was great at the time. It's not any more

System Shock/Space Hulk



System Shock: a true classic.

WO ABSOLUTE CORKERS FOR less than the price of an evening out - in fact, if you get this, you'll accumulate money faster than an American TV Evangelist, because you won't go out for the next month or so. Finally, an attractive savings programme.

Anyway, System Shock is the first game that could legitimately use the term 'cyberpunk', because it's a firstperson viewed, futuristic adventure set in space that actually has you 'jacking into cyberspace' at regular intervals. It's beautifully thought out, gripping and

scary - even if, post Duke and Quake, the 'looking around' controls seem a little cumbersome.

Space Hulk is another all-time classic. You control a team of Space Marines in a gore-laden exploration of a floating spaceship that's over-run with aliens so dangerous they make Jeffrey Dahmer look like Jeffrey from Rainbow. One of the best compilations around.

Publisher: Telstar Price: £19.99

SCORE: 92



PGA Tour Golf 486/FIFA Soccer



Ye olde golf game.

HE FIRST HI-TECH VERSION OF PGA was just a little too much like the old PGA Tour Golf with better graphics. The ball dynamics were ropey and the shot control system a bit illogical. Compared to the later versions, it just feels wrong. In fact, it doesn't stand a chance when compared with some of the other 'golden oldies' of the computer golf world, such as Links 386, which for my money is still utterly fab and incredibly addictive. As far as the PGA series goes, you'd be better off buying the latest, European Tour version. Crap football game gets the red card.

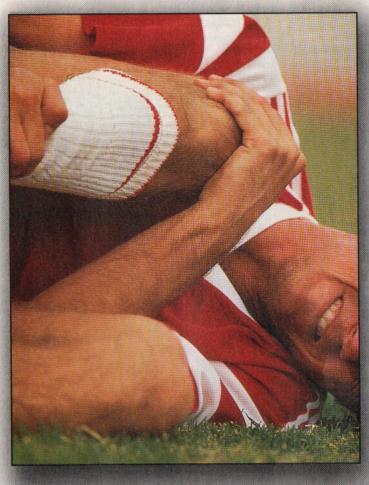
The same goes for the original, big sprite version of FIFA. Both of these games are elderly now, and the world has moved on. We now have Links LS (the best golf game available on PC bar none) and lots of new versions of FIFA to play about with (check out the FIFA 97 preview in this issue). If both of these games were half-decent in their own right, I'd say run off and buy this compilation. But they're not. So don't.

Publisher: Telstar Price: £19.99

SCORE: 60



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MODEMS

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Microsoft SideWinder Core Components S

Gamepad

It looks a like it should be called the Bat-pad, but it's not. It's the SideWinder Gamepad. And it's made by Microsoft. Dave Mathleson's heard of them, so we asked him to take a look.

NE OF THE MOST HOTLY CONTENDED

debates in the whole world is

what the best combination of

controls are for Doom (or Quake

or Duke or whatever). Rubbish people

with no mates claim that a keyboard's

all you need, whereas cool, hard types

prefer to use a mouse as well in order

to express themselves fully. Flight sim

the task of memorising the function of

every key on the keyboard, together with

their shifted and alt-ed combinations,

heads don't usually have a choice of

controls; they're simply faced with

in order to operate all the different radar modes and stuff. Since this is part of the fun for them, we'll dwell no longer on their sad lives.

The one aspect of controlling PC games that everyone agrees on is the supremacy of gamepads for arcadey games like beat 'em ups and footie games. For these sort of games, the ideal playing position is lying down on the floor, nowhere near a keyboard or a table or other rest. While there are plenty of pads now available for the PC, the number of joysticks on the market didn't stop Microsoft from releasing one, and the same applies here.

The SideWinder Gamepad is a rather sexy-looking black job with steely bluey grey trim. Unlike

> most gamepads, the SideWinder has two 'horns'

keystrokes to any of the buttons you choose, which means complete Duke and Quake gamepad grooviness. What's more, you can assign a set of operations to each button for maximum complexity. The beauty of this system is that it remembers the settings for each game, as long as they run under Windows 95 (this includes DOS games running in a pos session).

That's the theory, but what about the practice? It's pretty good, really. The horn-handle things certainly make it very easy to use, and the two finger buttons underneath are perfect for sideways strafing movements in Duke Ouakem.

If you've got any mates, you can daisy-chain pads together. This works by lifting a sneaky little hatch underneath. You can also use this slot for a conventional joystick as well, so you don't have to scrabble around under the desk when you fancy a change.

The sheer luxury of having all the controls at your fingertips is hard to beat, though, and with careful setting up and a bit of practice you'll never need your keyboard again.

> While there are other decent gamepads out there, the SideWinder's combination of comfy controls and groovy software setup make it an all-round winner. Now all Microsoft need to do is release some decent games that support it. Z

(Above) Get your mits round this horny ten-buttoned devil

Microsoft

bottom edge that act as handles, making it much easier to hold than most. There are also loads of buttons - ten in all, including two clever underneath ones.

Installing the thing is pretty straightforward, as it plugs into a normal gameport. The SideWinder is designed to run under Windows 95, and it comes with an install routine as well as a rather nifty set-up program. Because the gamepad uses a digital interface, there are no calibration problems. The set-up program is truly excellent, though, as it uses a nice Windows interface to assign in-game keystrokes to gamepad buttons, called the Game Profiler. All you do is locate the .exe file for the game (duke3d.exe in my case). You then get a pretty picture of the gamepad, with little buttons that light up when you press the ones on the controller itself. You can then assign

Score

It's got loads of buttons, looks smart and is.

Price: £39.99 Release Date: Out now **Publisher: Microsoft** Tel: 01734 271000

form of two 16MB SIMMS. While there "If you're tired and depressed, aren't any games that need more a nice new PC is the best.

> by a Diamond Stealth 3D 2000 and SoundBlaster sB32 card respectively. Although the Diamond card is designed with specially written 3D games in mind (of which

It'll let you run games like

you'll be playing so much,

We gave well-known poet

and gobshite Dave Mathieson

NE OF THE MOST DEPRESSING

things in the entire universe is

reading a review of a fab new

game, gawping in amazement

your fingers will ache."

a nice new PC just to

at the lush screenshots, and

then realising that it'll run

upgrades that you can buy to help things along - more

NAM, a faster graphics card, or a new CPU will all make a

difference, but there comes a

time in every young gamer's

things are getting a bit silly at the moment, with the

prices of faster Pentium systems dropping like flies (that

Anyone who's seen a PC advert recently will have noticed that

are dead). There are a few reasons

the moment, and having 16MB of

for this. Firstly RAM is very cheap at

the stuff is no longer 'big and clever'.

Secondly, the prices of Intel Pentium

crus have dropped as their next gene-

most noticeably Cyrix, have started to

produce Pentium-compatible processors,

All this flannel about non-Intel CPUs

relevant here because this PC from

*166+ processor. The name is a bit of

s con, though, as it actually runs at

измнz. However, clever optimisation

neans that it should be equivalent to an

Intel P166 (more of this later). There's no

point in a having a nice clever processor

Triton 2 chipset and comes with 512K of

pipeline burst cache. Don't worry about

how this works (I don't). All you need to

know is that this combination is quick.

There's also 32MB of EDO RAM in the

If the rest of the system holds things

back, though, and Core have sensibly

orted things out on this front. The

motherboard is based on the latest

Core Components is fitted with a Cyrix

ration Pentium Pro chip has hit the

market. Finally, other companies,

driving prices down.

life when a new PC is the

only option

like a crock of shite on

your trusty old 486. Of course, there are plenty of

shut him up.

Duke and Quake, and

than 16MB to run, the extra certainly won't do any harm.

Graphics and sound are taken care of

gone further than most in ensuring that everything's there for decent gaming, from the ThrustMaster joystick to the 1.7GB hard drive.

Overall then, a well thought-out spec at a decent price. If I were going to buy it, though, I'd get Core to whack in an Intel P166 instead. Z

there aren't any at the moment), it's also a good conventional card. In order for you to enjoy all the lovely graphics, Core have thoughtfully provided an Iiyama 17inch monitor, which is loads better than many cheap 17inch models.

The performance of this system was, as you'd expect, pretty jolly good. There's plenty of welly here to give decent frame-rates even in the most demanding games. When we ran the Quake framerate test, however, there was a bit of a disappointment. Quake, you see, uses floating-point calculations. While the Cyrix CPU easily outperforms an Intel chip of the same clock speed, the FPU (floating point unit) isn't as quick. This slowed down the Quake score to roughly the same as a Pentium 150.

This minor glitch aside, Core have provided everything you'd need for running the best that games developers have to offer. While it's not the cheapest PC you'll come across, you can at least guarantee that you'll not be left feeling frustrated in six months time. There are plenty of other manufacturers out there who could provide you with a similar system, but to their credit, Core have

(Above) A slice of easy PC action with Core's spanking new P166.

Score

A PC with lots of good stuff at a nice price.

Price: £2128 (incl VAT and delivery) Release Date: Out now lisher: Core Components Tel: 01772 729999

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The Addictive Game http://www.3do.com/

If you thought 'sad' was biting your toenails or smell-testing your underpants, think again... **David McCandless does both** these things and has found something sadder to while away the hours.

MERIDIAN 59

HIS, UNFORTUNATELY, IS THE future. The Internet, not content with being a repository for 11-year-old porno addicts, software pirates, and people who will set fire to themselves when Leonard Nimoy dies, is now courting the lowest rung on the evolutionary ladder.

"Who?" we hear you ask nervously, squirming in your chair. We clear our throats and reply: "Role-playing gamers."

If you thought AD&D was bad, wait until you get a load of Meridian 59, the sprawling on-line universe created by upo - the multimedia company fronted by the improbably-named Trip Hawkins, he who created the ill-fated 3DO games onsole. After the sale of their 'M2' chip technology to some multi-national or other, 300 have turned their resources to Internet gaming and created a monster a hideously addictive role-playing game set in a glorified 3D chart-room the size of a continent, an interactive

(Right) Jasper - one of the five metropolises on the Meridian continent.



counterparts from around the world are the characters, and where using the words "forsooth" and "breastplate" in idle conversation won't get you arrested by the FBI.

Just pulling itself from the mire of Beta testing, Meridian 59 already boasts 10,000 pan-global players. It also sports a vast range of locales, from medieval metropolises, rustic villages, pastoral countryside, mountain ranges, and all those sorts of places. Graphically and gameplay-wise it smacks heavily of those 'outsidey' RPGs like Elder Scrolls: Arena, DaggerFall, Ultima 8, and Legends Of Valour.

The software comes on CD and after installing it onto your PC, you'll find all the graphics and resources squatting on your hard disk, saving you a mungous

download. Then, using your Internet Provider account (IP), you dial into Demon or Pipex or whoever you're with and then whop infobahnly to one of 3Do's local servers (there are eight or so around the world). You have then entered the Meridian 59 (God have mercy on your social development).

Beyond Quake is very little, you might

imagine, in terms of games you can play

salivatingly over el Net (as it is in Italy). Not true,

actually. There are many, many on-line games springing

up all around the world like fungi through the floorboards of an

unvacuumed flat. In reality, none really surpass Quake's in-your-groin action or indeed superlative 3D graphics, but what they lose in window-

dressing, they gain in all-around addictive content and one all-encompassing

attraction - The Chance To Beat Americans (And Taunt Them With Your Dry British Wit).

After choosing various attributes for your character, including might, intellect, and, er, karma, as well as sex, your 'looks', and your name with requisite over kill on harsh consonants such as 'k', 'g', and 'th', you enter the world proper.

The graphics are not sensational. Everything is boxy and garish, very Wolfenstein in look and feel. Everything has been kept simple to avoid server

OVER 18's

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G

Tolkien wet-dream, where your on-line

wer-heads, but you do get a healthy sense of location and space, and at least you're getting a graphical representation of where you are, unlike AD&D.

The control system is not un-Quake like in its delivery. Movement is hinged around the mouse and keyboard. You can look up and down, rotate 360 degrees, and amble around at a gentle canter or a heartfelt gallop. You can't get on top of things (bar other players), but your quests may lead you to dingy dungeons, fauna mazes, mountain passes, or slightly salacious pubs.

The big deal in Meridian 59 is, of course, the real people surrounding you. As a microcosm of a fledgingly capitalist society, you can barter precious items, buy accommodation in inns, bribe others, obtain weapons, or even rob people. You can chat with other people, forge alliances or even attempt dodgy 'net sex' with apparently female characters. You can band together to form a guild, a social club, or a party en route to treasure and glory. You can also be nasty and go round killing people (although if you do so, you're branded with an omnipresent 'People Killer' icon so righteous people and self-appointed policemen can chose to execute you). You can welch on deals, rub people up the wrong way, or perhaps blind them with your good old English sarcasm and nick their purse. A healthy array of monsters populate the scarier areas of the game giant rats, zombies, spiders, scorpions, and trolls - and if you meet an untimely and entrail-laden death, you will be sent to the Underworld, where rafts of puzzles and challenges will confound your return to the 'real world'.

On-line or off-line, the world swings on without you. The idea is to gain experience, through defeating monsters, solving quests, and studying with teachers. As your wisdom grows, so does your spell list, your health points, and your combat skills. The ultimate pinnacle of achievement is to become all-powerful – a god, and then,





(Far Left) Some of your on-line chums gather for a moody group photo.

(Right) Coolio! You can bash spiders until they bleed marmalade.

presumably start hoodwinking people into believing in you even though you patently don't exist. The whole universe is richly complex, packed with hidden nooks and crannies, treasure troves, and mysterious things. This, alongside the good 200-300 people on-line simultaneously, ensures there is rarely a dull moment. Many, many sad moments, but rarely a dull one.

VERDICT: Horrifically powerful alternative to Quake, AD&D, single player role-playing games, and, indeed, real-life itself.

REQUIREMENTS: IP account. Modem.

Windows 95.

Meridian 59 is now up and running, but, at time of writing, wasn't quite 'finito'. Expect us to return to this mythical universe in the near future for a fuller, more rounded review. Check out last month's CD for a free demo.

ONSLAUGHT

Firebrand International
The Web Game
http://www.webplayer.com/

Not all on-line 'jouets' demand the fastest modem in the universe. Duncan Swain checks out the only web-based game around.

espite the Internet's current status as panacea to all mankind's ills, gamesplayers know it as a completely different kind of animal. Try fiddling (Below) Chat senselessly or make like Jesus and walk on water.

(Below left) The interface is very nice. (You're fired – Ed.)



when confronted by a Net game's hideously complicated front end software. Try to avoid migraine weeding out appropriate domain name servers and then try not to vomit with bewilderment when the software asks you for an IP address. Gamesplay via the amicable Net is far from child's play. It is, however, rather ironically, somewhat like the film Child's Play. Just how me anyone who'd rather be chased round a deserted graveyard by a demonically possessed, ginger-haired doll intent on piercing eyeballs with a hat pin, than bother going through the soul-destroying process of configuring

an on-line Quake death match.

with a 32-bit diallers. Try not to panic

However not every game playable over the Internet requires a right hemisphere the size of Bangladesh to configure the software. Some decent folk have been intelligent enough to work out that some of us (admittedly the slightly thicker ones with limited patience and a life) want gamesplaying on the Internet to be as easy as locating a picture of Terri Hatcher's breasts. A shining example of 'easy peasy lemon squeezy' comes in the form of OnSlaught, by Firebrand International. It's a multi-player strategic conquest and domination game, not dissimilar to a sort of military SimCity. And it is but a small vial of urine to get working.

Basically, OnSlaught has two major bonuses that make it well worth investigating. Firstly, if you're one of the 89% of Internet users who have Netscape as a browser, you've already got all the software and completed all the configuration you need to play the game (you can also use Microsoft's Explorer). Secondly, apart from your phone bill for connecting to your service provider, the game doesn't cost a penny to play and, even better, Firebrand say they will stay free for good. They make their money by selling advertising space on the site and are adherents of the original Net ethos that all software property is theft and should be distributed at no cost to the people who want to use it. Neat, non?

The game itself won't, as it stands, win any shiny awards for animation. It's more *Pacman* than *Duke Nukem* graphically, but its gameplay is engrossing. The premise is simple: you run a city which has a fixed population. You must decide on your main industry, be it food or weapons, so once you've amassed a manageable amount of the two, you can send out your armies of tanks, planes and troops to try to overrun someone

else's city, leaving your best butchers, bakers and pizza delivery boys to prepare the grub for those left behind. There are all kinds of strategic decisions to be made and instantly regretted. Alliances are forged and betrayed. You'll lose a fair few cities before you really get into the swing of it, but then you'll be able to extend your autocracy into an empire, with you – you megalomaniacal dictator you – at the centre, like a big fat spider.

There's other cool stuff to make OnSlaught a full-rounded on-line gaming experience. You can taunt your mainly American opponents via e-mail on Firebrand's closed system. You can choose between large and small worlds to play in. Games can go on for hours, days, or even weeks. At the moment 20 is the maximum number of players per world and Firebrand reckons OnSlaught has up to 5000 regular players already, impressive considering the company never advertises, and current players will have found the game through their own efforts or by word of mouth.

Firebrand, despite only having gone on-line last year, are already looking to improve its hardware setup and hire more programmers. Sound and extra animated AVI movies will soon be added to the game as will a new 2D interface and a posh 3D VRML version (basically a 3D version of hyper text). There's also a brand new JAVA game in the pipeline claimed to surpass OnSlaught in playability and functionality. And for gagging Doomsters, DeathMatch OnSlaught should be introduced by the time you read this.

VERDICT: Much potential.
A little croaky but soon to be improved.
REQUIREMENTS: IP account. Web browser (Netscape 2.0 or Microsoft Explorer).

Terrisic!

America On Line (AOL) account. However, stuck to this month's mag, you will see a CD with the words *Terris* all over it. On it you'll find everything you'll need to play *Terris* (except for a decent modem; anything less than a 14.4 will make life slow). There's all the artwork for the game pre-loaded, free access to AOL for at least 10 hours and because it's Windows based, no worries about memory. The game will run fine on a 486 (some players run on 386s).

TERRIS
America On-Line

Black Ant is slain! Black Ant had nothing of value

damage to 37

The Sad Game

Daniel Emery calls himself
Thrax, takes Pro Plus to
play this game and has no
friends. Keyword here: 'sad'.

Thrax broadly gestures at the creatures

The room fills with blazing lightning.

here has always been a place in my heart for adventure games. From *The Hobbit* on the Spec, *Twin Kingdom Valley* on the BBC and some adventure game on the university's computer, the name of which will leave an indelible blank on my mind for life. But finally there is a game that is just like the days of yore except that a) it's fast b) it's worldwide and c) it's good. The joys of *MUD* have finally escaped the net and have appeared in a fresh new form on AOL. It's now called *Terris*.

Now if Quake is the genetically-enhanced clone of Wolfenstein 3D, then Terris is the love child of AD&D and the old mainframe multi-player games. Although these games involve changing your name to Algarloxtrexx The Barbarian and wielding a +2 Battle Axe in the Mystic Wardrobe of Thane, you don't really have to be a complete twat to play (although it helps).

Terris is a mythical land within which there are quests to solve, over 200 different monsters, a bloody enormous map, and a load of other people on-line trying to do the same thing. Sounds simple? Well it is and it isn't. The puzzles start easy (walk up the road, get flower, return) but get murderously hard later. The monsters come in four flavours. Laughably easy, tough, really tough and Shit! Run! For a sense of achievement, Terris also sports a league table feature (world ranking, class ranking and so on) creating a furious 'I am the best' mentality - something anyone who has played a deathmatch tourney will know all too well. What could be take it or leave it becomes pathologically addictive. People will stay on for 'just another five minutes' all night trying to go up a rank. Well, I do.

Careful where you step. Terris is entirely text-based. No sprites, no rendering, no shaded polygrams – bugger-all in fact. This takes a little getting used to, and you do end up scrawling very sad maps of dungeons



(Above) The wonderful world of *Terris*. With castles. And trees. And mountains. And pixies. And elves.

Queen is hit by a intense wave of electricity for 72 damage!
Black Ant is hit by a intense wave of electricity for 73 damage! It's resistance reduces the

Black Ant is hit by a intense wave of electricity for 80 damage! It's resistance reduces the

(Top) Yes, it really is that exciting.

(Below) Lots of silky pantless demons. Keyword here: 'homo-erotic'.





and the like – but it makes the game fast and demands not a little imagination from the player. You map to survive. The land is huge with dungeon locations, prisons, lost towers, a huge ocean and even an Island full of dinosaurs in *Jurassic Park* fashion. If you don't know your way, you will get lost and walk straight into a bunch of nasties. Then you'll die. Horribly.

You can improve your chances of

survival in two ways: ascending the 'level' by gaining experience killing beasties and doing quests (which will give you access to more spells, skills and other valuables); or by teaming up with other players and forming a hit squad to take out difficult monsters. The other players add a whole twist to the game. Because they are real people (despite having names like Timesy, Denard, Wulfclaw and Sharqua) everything becomes unpredictable. You never know quite what they'll do. However, if they wind you up (as Americans are wont to do) you can't kill 'em. Annoying perhaps, but this would result in speed typists always winning. Not good. And on the subject of pains in the

arse there are two major bugbears in Terris. The lesser of the two is that you will inevitably meet a couple of mindless tossers playing the game (the standard danger with any on-line game). The other one is the mythical monster 'Lag'. This frightening behemoth rears its ugly head everytime America goes on line (around about 7pm GMT). The Terris server can't cope with the traffic and grinds to a snail's pace. This can be very frustrating and often leads to your getting killed. However AOL have made assurances that a new server will be in place by the time you read this.

Mowever, it should be said that Terris' down points are minimal, and the game play is hot. With a non-stop diet of killing, questing and trying to better yourself each night, the gameplay is limitless and compulsive. The absence of graphics isn't much of a hindrance and indeed adds to the game in some respects. It is definitely one of those games you'll either love or hate. However if you have a modem, AOL are offering free time before you have to subscribe, so Terris is definitely worth a look. But me, I'm totally addicted and I'm off now to slay a dragon.

VERDICT: Sad. Sad. Sad. Sad. Sad. Sad. But addictive.
REQUIREMENTS: AOL
Account. Modem. No
girlfriend.

SUBSPACE

Virgin Interactive Entertainment. The Asteriods-type game http://www.vie.com/subspace

If action is what you want and *Quake* is what you can't get, then the Internet has an alternative. Stuart Houghton goes retro.

re Virgin having a laugh? 2D graphics? Small spacecraft firing pixel-sized projectiles at one another? Lots of inertialed drifting about? Players frantically trying to thrust the exact amount in the other direction in order to stop dead (and uniformly failing to do so)? It's Asteroids innit? Eh? EH?

Good guess, but not quite. SubSpace is the latest combatant in the on-line games arena, sneaking up quietly behind heavyweights such as C&C and the Q word, hoping to smack them over the head with a rock while they brag about the size of their weapons.

Currently the joys of SubSpace are for Windows 95 users only and work best if played using via 32 Bit Dial-Up-Networking. Another catch is the need for a full IP account with your service provider. Fortunately, most providers offer this service nowadays, but some (notably AOL) do not, so check before you download to save yourself an exercise in frustration.

Once on your hard disk, the game is a doddle to install, although there is a good technical support section on the SubSpace Web site to guide you through any problems that may occur. You'll need to create a password for yourself and a user name by which you will be known in the SubSpace universe. As this is an on-line game, you should of course select something sensible like 'StarKiller', 'Spooge-atollah', or 'Borakkk, scourge of the ice planet Thrunknor'. Armed with a suitably foolish nom-de-frag, you can now connect to the SubSpace server by selecting one of six combat zones. These are theoretically graded by the experience of the players, although in practice only the expert zone is barred to less experienced users by restricting access to low-scoring players (ie us).

There is a choice of six craft for your flying pleasure with the usual compliment of abilities (fast + low shields; slow + high shields + bigger guns; rubbish weapons + stealth, etc.). I would recommend you choose a slower craft to as they are all total swine to control. You'll save yourself much frantic braking and cursing of Newton if you experiment with low-speed first.

You know the drill. Fly around the 2D arena, grab power-ups and frag or be fragged. Fine in theory, but with a slow connection this is harder than a stale granite sandwich. The problem lies in the fact that your craft seems to be moving perfectly smoothly, but the other players appear to jump around the screen as the software tries to update their positions. This caused much confusion initially due to my devil-may-care attitude to instruction reading and my assumption that everyone else knew how to perform the secret short-range warp manoeuvre.

Assuming you get a decent connection (the front end grades the current server load for each of the zones from 'Good' to 'Terrible' to allow you a choice before you log in), you should be able to get to grips with the controls and connect bullet to prey with a little practice. To avoid massacre by the hordes of no-life fragmeisters it may be a good tactic to seek out similar dweebs and form a squadron where you reap the benefits of ganging up on the hard kids, using chat channels separate to those normally used to call your opponents girls' names to co-ordinate your attacks. They do this big time in



(Above) The actual game SubSpace won't grab so here are pretty screenshots of the homepage.

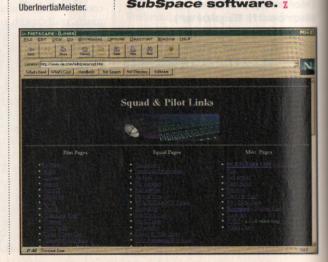
the States already apparently, so look out for huge packs of Uncle Sam's finest who fly about the universe looking for easy kills.

As you may have gathered, this game is unlikely to stun people to silence with its gut-wrenchingly fast 3D polygons, fractal compression texture maps and dynamic light-sourcing because, frankly it hasn't got any. The graphics are simple, but crisply drawn and clearly represent what is going on. Younger readers should know that, once, all games looked similar to this. Sweets were cheaper in them days an' all.

It is also worth restating that this is a (currently) free beta version. Virgin have set up an excellent Web site for the game with plenty of scope for players to contribute ideas to its development and have promised to make several versions available, freezing each revision so you can choose your favourite flavour.

But at the end of the day there's no doubt that you'll find much to enjoy in SubSpace, although it is not likely to work as a single player game and, as ever with on-line gaming, it's only the excitement of going up against real people which really makes it work.

(Below) A hall of fame. Yes, you too can become the UberbardiaMeister (Below) A hall of same. Yes, you too can become the UberbardiaMeister (Below) A hall of Provider account (IP). Windows 95. Special SubSpace software. Z





ave as much as





20 Worms



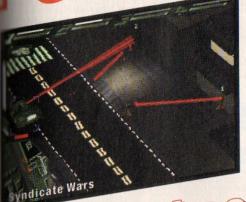
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Discworld

I've got all the items that the Arch-Chancellor wants except dragon's breath. How do I get it?

Karl Daly, Newport

Five pints of Old Tanglefoot followed by a packet of pork scratchings and a curry usually does the trick for me!

When you find a body lying in the gutter and you want to know if it's still alive, you can hold a mirror in front of its mouth to see if it steams up with its breath. Well it's the old mirror trick we're going to use on the dragon.

You'll find a mirror in the palace bathroom, so take it and catapult yourself up to the rooftops. Climb to the tower and use the mirror on the tip of the flagpole. Use the mirror, once more to adjust it, and the dragon will do the rest.

Sam And Max

(Below right) Bloody

passages and exploding

chests. No. not another

episode of ER, but the

remains of the Goblin

(Below) Is the cat sat

on the rug? Sam and

Max do their bit for the

Cats' Protection League

way to the charred

King in Ultima VII -

The Serpent Isle.

I'm completely stuck! I've arrived in Bumpusville, been chucked out on numerous occasions, and have found absolutely nothing to help me. What do I do now?

P Kelly, London



What you really want out of this place is the wig, but it will take a couple of trips to get it. First, use the bed and pick up the pillow. You can now use the golf ball retriever to get the book from above the door. Go to the music room and watch the band. Leave, and when you see the robot, use the book on him. Connect all the wires and the robot will go into the music room and set off the alarm. Go to the alarm room and use the alarm equipment. In the virtual reality room pick up the sword, enter the cave and kill the dragon. Pick up the heart to get a key. Return to the music room and use the key to disable the alarm. Go to the trophy room and get the photo of John Muir. You will now have to leave and visit the Savage Jungle and the Celebrity Vegetable Museum before you return to get the wig. I'll let you work those bits out.

Ultima VII

These Ultima games are bloody hard aren't they? In part 2 of Ultima VII – The Serpent Isle. I can't get past the knight's test. I've found the claw and used it on myself, as the scroll suggests, but I can't find the ashes of the Goblin King Wossisname. There's a locked door near the start, but not one of the six keys I've found unlocks it. Could you tell me if I've done something horribly wrong? I can't get very far without becoming a knight as no one in Monitor wants to talk to me.

D Chambers, Bognor Regis

Why do you want to be a knight? Being a king is much better. As my old granny used to say, "Once a king, always a king. But once a knight's enough!". Mind you, I never did understand that one.

There are two invisible passages in this area of the dungeon. The first is near some exploding chests, and the other is marked by two torches which are hanging close together on the wall. The secret room containing the ashes is on the west side of the dungeon. You need to use the blood with the ashes to kill the wolf.





Quake's secret levels

So you've given the shareware version of this game a good thrashing, but have you visited all of the secret levels?

Nightmare level

Once you've beaten the shareware version at normal difficulty how about trying it all again? But this time go for it with the odds a little more in favour of the bad guys.

Start as usual and walk through one of the normal difficult teleporters. Instead of going into the dimension of the doomed slipgate, walk into the room for episode four, The Elder World - the one with the pool. Go back into the pool and then swim forward again as far as you can go. Sink down and you'll drop to the bottom. If you pick the right spot you'll end up standing on a wooden frame. Walk around this and into the cave which leads into the Nightmare level entrance. You'll be confronted by the same levels as before but this time it's a lot tougher.

Ziggurat Vertigo – Low Gravity level

On Grisly Grotto, in the room with the five floor pads and the wall guns, two side rooms will open up when the floor pads are pressed – these lead down to the areas where the ogres shot at you from the floor below. Push both the buttons on either side, and the message "A secret cave has opened" will appear. Go back to the main water area, and from where you enter the water, swim right. Between the two pyramid shapes a wall will have opened, revealing a secret area. Swim up to this point and enter the circular teleporter.

Super StreetFighter II Turbo The Great Akuma cheat

To be the Grand Guardian, follow these not so easy instructions:

On the selection screen start the game using a punch button – select a turbo setting with the same button.
The cursor will now be on Ryu.

Leave the cursor there for roughly three seconds, then move right to T-Hawk and repeat. Now move left to Guile and do the same. Move the cursor to Cammy, making sure you pass over Dhalsim. Leave the cursor there for the same amount of time, then go back to Ryu, passing over Ken. Wait for three seconds, then press all the punch buttons. If you've carried out the moves correctly Ryu's portrait will turn black, allowing you to play as Akuma. (Submitted by Michael Downing, Doncaster)



(Above) Cop a load of these extra super secret special levels in *Quake*.

(Above right) "I'm telling ya, British Beef is safe." A huge chopper-wielding Witchhavener.



The lightning gun

This cheat will only work in deathmatch mode.

Start a deathmatch game in the Welcome to Quake Arena, enter the console option and type <REGISTERED 1>.

If you now go to the room for episode three, you can go through the previously locked doors. Here you'll find the lightning gun plus lots of power cells.

(Submitted by Gavin Yuill, Essex)

Railroad Tycoon

Go to the top layer of maps and press <\$> to get 500,000 dollars. Another way to make big cash is to press <\$HIFT/F1/\$> together - this instantly gives over \$3,000,000. However, it seems that this can only be used once.

Comanche

In the options menu (press <ESC>), hold down the backspace key and type <KYLE>. A new pull-down menu will appear called CHEATS. Use these options to repair and re-arm your chopper.

(Submitted by Iain MacMillan, Aberdeenshire)

Witchhaven

Press '<-' followed by backspace to stop the game, then you can enter the following cheats:

wango Gives keys mommy Gives magic scooter Gives weapon

Sim Tower

When starting a new tower, simply click in the lowest left-hand corner to double your starting money.

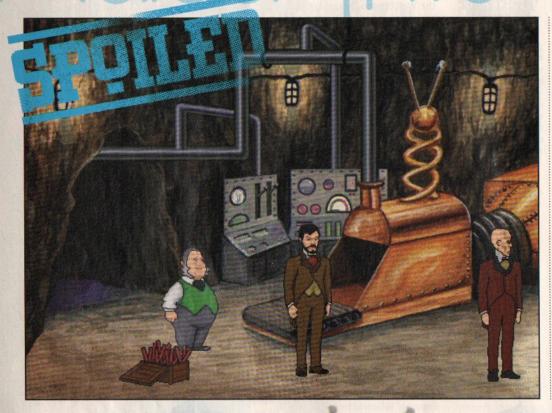
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The Gene Machine

We've been around the world in 80 days, journeyed to the moon, and dived 20,000 leagues under the sea just to bring you the solution to this Great British Adventure. Hooray for us, and three cheers for old Queen Vic. Gawd Bless her Majesty!

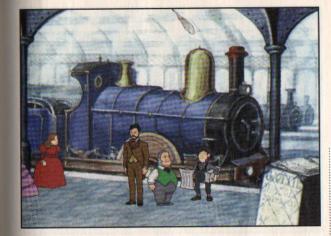


across the road to the cab. Once inside your house pick up the cigar case and the old newspaper. Get the letter from the hall carpet and read it. Go upstairs and take the key from the bedside table. Return to the hallway, then go downstairs to Mossop's room and get the syrup of figs and whisky bottles. Go to the study and use the key to open the drawer. Search the drawer and take the house deeds. Pick up the artefact from the table.

Leave home and travel to your girlfriend's house. Enter the house and talk to the maid. Head for the garden and pick the catnip flower at the entrance. Talk to Maribella, when she asks for tea, return to the house and ask the maid to prepare tea for her mistress. Leave the house and return home.

Give the catnip to the cat and receive the mouse in turn. Speak to your servant and ask where you can meet some dubious characters – Mossop will tell you the address of a Whitechapel pub. Search your wallet three times to reveal all of its contents. Leave home and travel to the pub.





In the East End

Talk to the first drinker, and when he asks for something to wipe his greasy hands, offer him your handkerchief.

Return to your girlfriend's house and pick up the tea. Use the cigar case to pick up the slice of cake. Use the handkerchief on the cup to make it greasy then take it to Maribella. Once your girlfriend is holding the cup, give her the mouse. Take the ring which she drops on the grass.

Examine the club card from your wallet, then go there in the cab. Enter the club and take the snuff box. Enter the main room and talk to the Earl who is playing golf. When the Earl asks for his port, go to the butler and use the syrup of figs in the glass of port wine. Talk to the butler to make him deliver the port. Take the Earl's calling card from the floor once he leaves. Talk to the club members and make the wager. Talk again to the club members to make the side bet over the use of a ship. Offer your house deeds as the stake.

Leave the club and travel to the railway station. Buy a newspaper.

Return to the club, talk to the club member and read the new paper to secure the bet. Travel to the East End pub, walk to the back room where you'll find the forger and attempt to give him the old paper. Give him the ring and the old paper followed by the new one. Leave the pub, use the coach and then return to collect the amended paper from the back room in the East End pub.

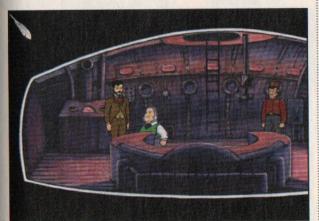
newspaper and you've got the first ingredient for the making of a classic 'Sting' which will win you a ship plus a full crew. (Above right) What's a

(Above) Buy a

(Above right) What's a nice guy like you doing in a low dive like this? You're looking for a camera? I'll just bet you are!

(Below right) Identifying the site of Disney Island isn't so difficult — simply take a trip to the moon inside a steam engine converted to a rocket, take a picture of the Earth using a Victorian camera stolen from a brothel, and use snuff powder soaked in whisky to provide the flash. What's the problem?

(Below) Okay, you've made it to the lair of the mad professor. Now you need to convince him that it would be a 'good idea' to destroy his invention and blow up the island.





Go to the club and give the amended paper to the club member to win the ship.

Travel to Buckingham Palace and try to enter. Use the Earl's calling card to gain entrance. Talk with the Queen and eventually you'll be permitted to take a letter from the pile.

Travel to the Science Museum and talk with the guard. When you are refused entry, leave, use the coach, return, and give the artefact to the guard. Take a punchcard from the computer and use it in the computer. Take another card and leave. Go home and give the punch card to the cat, who will rip it up.

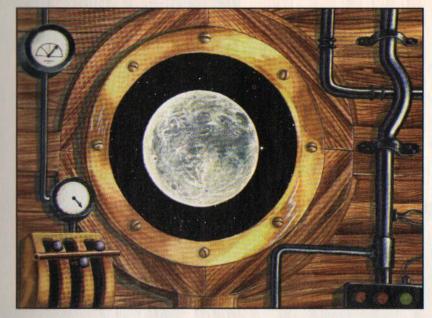
Travel to the docks and talk to the harbourmaster about everything. Eventually you will learn about the missing map, and the blockade. Go back to Buckingham Palace and ask the Queen for permission to pass through the blockade - she will give you another letter. Travel to the docks and show the pass to the harbourmaster. When he refuses to let your ship leave without plans, give him the dummy cigar as a bribe and he will give you a map. As you still won't be able to leave harbour without plans, take the coach back to the museum. Put the damaged card in the computer. Leave the museum and travel to the professor's house. Talk with him, then enter the barn and get the vitriol and remote control. Go to the East End pub and talk with the barman until he gives you a ploughman's lunch. Return to the professor's house and talk with him. You will now be told to find a camera and flash-powder.

Return to Whitechapel and enter the brothel. Talk with the woman at the door, then give her your letter from the Queen. Go upstairs and talk with Dolly until »





TROUBLESHOOTER



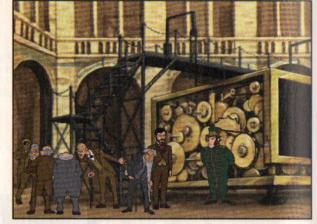
« she gives you the camera! Use the whisky on the snuffbox to create flashpowder. Travel back to the professor and talk to him again. Board the rocket and blast off for the moon.

To the moon and back

Use the hammer to get the oxygen pipe. Take the spade and the space suit. Look through the porthole in the ceiling. Use the controls as follows: first move the engine control (far right) upwards to almost the last position. Move the central control upwards to the threequarters up position. Move the far left control to the same point as the far right control. When all three levers are in the right position you'll get the message "That seems

to have aligned the levers correctly". Now 'click' on the far right lever to see your inventory. Use the oxygen pipe to jam the levers into position.

Exit the spaceship and enter the cave. Wait until Robert enters the next cave entrance, then look through the hole in the wall. Move Robert through the room with the remote control. Cross over the chasm using the fallen rock to the next room and use the spade to dig up the mineral deposit. Collect the moon rock from the hole, then exit the caves. Put the camera on the moon's surface and take a picture of the earth. Examine the photograph. Return and speak to the professor, who will give you a cheese extractor. Use the extractor on the moon rock to get the



(Left) Position the moor in the middle of the porthole using the three levers, then use a piece of old pipe to keep them in place.

(Above) Talk to the guard at the Science Museum.

(Right) See if you can muse her majesty.

(Below) Return to the

native village and give

the chief the rock in

exchange for Mossop.



Then return to the professor and use the vitriol on the phosphate to create oxygen.

Back on Earth

Return to the docks and board the ship. Speak with the Captain. Talk again and give him your world map. When the engine stops, walk along the deck and take the boat hook. Move further aft and go below to the boiler room. Get the oil can and the



the bagpipes to stoke up the engine. To the bottom of the sea

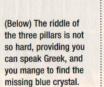
and stand near the flag. Tell Mossop

to get the flag. Use the flag to seal the

split pipe. Go to the boiler room and use

Once you are dropped on the ice-flow, find and enter the submarine. Talk with the Captain then exit the submarine into Atlantis. Play the organ, read the bundle of letters. Take the diving suit from the bedroom and examine the mermaid picture. Return to the screen above the submarine and reread the letters until Mossop asks who the letters are from. (Revealing that they are from the mermaid.) Talk with Captain Nematode to tell him why he is seeking Atlantis.

Return to your own ship and speak with the Captain to move the ship south. Show him the photograph to move to



(Above) The Gene

Machine tea-towel,

every mama should

(Above right) Watch

out for flares in the

Gene Machine room.

have one.



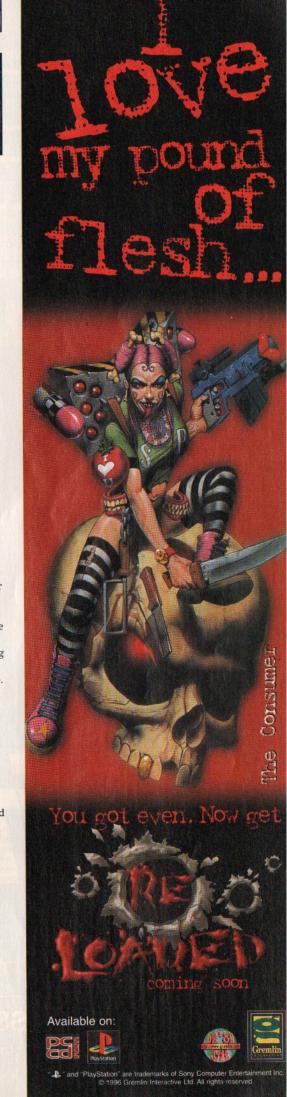


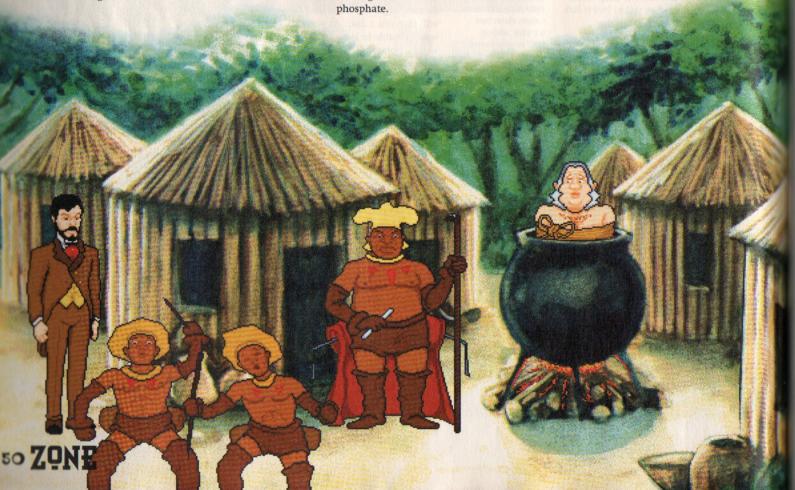
Desert island

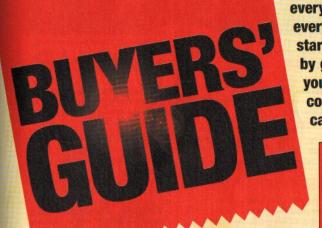
Take the rock from the beach and go into the jungle. Pick berries from the bush at the side of the lake. Return to main path and take the ivy from the side of it. Enter the village. After speaking with the chief, place the ivy on the rock, then place the berries on the 'ivy-rock'. Give this trinket to the Chief. Follow the guide into the cave. Enter the serpent's mouth and take the sabre. Return to the cave mouth and use the sabre on the vine. Take the furry animal and place it on the pad in the serpent's mouth. Enter the inner cave and examine the plug in the ceiling. Leave the caves and return to the fresh water lake beside the berry bush. Look at the water. You will now be wearing the diving suit. Walk to the centre of the lake and pull the plug.

Return to the inner cave and cross over the cooled lava to the crystal room. Take the small blue crystal located in the top right of the central cluster. Oil the lift and use it to enter Atlantis. Enter the arena and take the rock. Enter the throne room and take the crystals. Return to the entrance room with the three plinths. Place the crystals - purple, green and blue on the three plinths - starting from the left. Go and speak to Captain Nematode to get the map. Return to the native village and exchange the rock for Mossop. Return to the ship. Give the Captain the map.

Later, on Disney Island Speak to the henchman and go through all of the options. Speak to the tentacle. Speak again to the henchman until he is attacked by the tentacle and you are freed. Enter the Gene Machine room and use the flare. Use the switch on the wall panel to reverse the machine. Speak to Doctor Disney to make him stand on the central plinth. Tell Mossop to throw the switch and turn the doctor into a pig and a snake. Return to the cage room and throw the wall switch to release the animals. Use the airship to escape from the island. A bit of a pedal and you'll be home in foggy London town in time for tea and crumpets. Z







Welcome to the all-new PC Zone Buyers' Guide. In it you'll find every game we've reviewed over the past 12 months, along with every other game we think you should know about since we started reviewing games back in March 1993. It's sub-divided by genre and we've tried to keep all the prices up to date so you can work out just how much of a bargain that budget compilation pack really is. Back issues are readily available call our Hotline on (01789) 489215 for further details.

R = reviewed (Issue number)

PII = playable demo (Issue number)

RD = rolling demo (Issue number)

LE = level editor

T = tips or solution (Issue number)



R = Recommended



P = Pants

ACTION

ABSOLUTE ZERO 70

Domark, £39.99* Sub-standard Wing Commander clone which needs loads of HD space.

R36 PD36

CD-ROM ev

Nick Park

Different.

THE ELECTRONIC ENTERTAINMENT MAGAZINE FOR MEN

FIRST ISSUE ON SALE

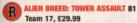
interviewed

10th October

THE ELECTRONIC ENTERTAINMENT MAGAZI

ALADDIN 70 Virgin, £29.99

nty-slippered platform action. Overall a sub-standard Prince Of Persia.



ASSAULT RIGS 78 Psygnosis, £34.99

psx-converted platform game in a tank. With twork options.

ATARI ACTION PACK 50

Activision, £24.99

Atari games for Windows: like a time nachine that takes you somewhere crap.

BATTLE ARENA TOSHINDEN 83 FunSoft, £34.99

Pretty good conversion of a good-looking beat 'em up which runs well without a 3D accelerator card. The gameplay itself is a bit too fireball-orientated with sword and sorcery effects. But if you must have it...

7th Level, £29.99

Great-looking cartoon beat 'em up with limited gameplay.



ANNON FODDER 90 C Virgin Interactive, £24.99

Great fun. Action-orientated forerunne

to the likes of Command & Conquer and Z.

Renegade, £32.99

Multi-directional scrolling, top-down, manioot 'em up action

RIME PATROL (& GAME GUN) 70

American Laser Games/Mirage, £39.99 Shoot 'em up with bundled lightgun which is compatible with some other titles, making it pretty good value.

CRUSADER 91 Origin/Electronic Arts, £49.99

Action, adventure, problem-solving, strategy and people getting their heads blown off all rolled into one in this isometric-viewed, futuristic shoot 'em up. Little Big Adventure with guns.

Gametek, £24.99

One of the games which helped build the reputation Gametek now enjoy. Why this should be gawd alone knows 'cos it's crap. Jerky, slow and just plain stupid.

R CYBERIA 80 Interplay, £49.99

Walk about for a bit in good-looking backgrounds, making decisions or solving puzzles which determine whether you live or die, then you get to do the shoot 'em up bit. And so on, until you finish it. Only for the extremely patient.

R93 PD93

Interplay, £44.95

If you liked the first game, you'll like this. Your quest (just for a change) is to save the world via the usual mix of arcade shooty bits and crap 'adventure' bits.

Accolade, £39.99

Extremely cack Road Rash-wannabe that got an insanely high score from a reviewer clearly suffering from some kind of mania himself. Take 40 off it, and you're nearer to what it deserves.

DARK FORCES 95 LucasArts/Virgin, £54.99

Wonderfully atmospheric Doom-isation of Star Wars that many people preferred to

Doom itself. Great graphics, tricky puzzles, true 3p levels and stirring tunes - and you get to shoot the heads off the Imperial Stormtroopers. What more could you lot ask for?

R24 PD25.

DESCENT 94 Interplay, £44.99 First version of the sick-making whirly,

spinny-roundy up and downy, 3D shoot 'em up. Seriously maimtastic. In a madman-

Interplay, £39.99 Hardened Descent players will find enough to test them, but there's a learning curve for newcomers too. New weapons, monsters and great sound effects, plus 'Capture the Flag' eam games. Great stuff.

R37 PD37

Gremlin, £34.99

Ropey conversion of Mega Drive's strategic copter shoot 'em up.

DOOM 96 iD Software, £29.99

Surely we don't need to tell you about this one. If you're still after levels for it though, we had 130 on Issue 17's cover disk, 500+ on Issue 21's, and about the same on Issue 25's And it's free on Issue 28's. See also Ultimate Doom, below

R13, PD28, LE1

C DOOM II 90 Virgin Interactive, £49.99

Extraordinarily expensive sequel with new

weapons and new monsters. A whole heap more levels for it on Issue 25's cover disk.

C DUKE NUKEM 3D 93 US Gold, £44.99

A Doom-clone that actually manages to be more inventive and entertaining than the original, although admittedly, they took enough time to get there. Full registered version has some cool new weapons and nastier enemies, a level designer, and the facility to convert Doom-waps into Duke maps. It's funny, too. Unfortunately, it came

ECCO THE DOLPHIN 55 Sega, £29.99

Very old Mega Drive game, Bloody boring and a bit of a pointless conversion in

out at not quite the right moment...

EXTREME GAMES 70 Psygnosis, £29.99

PSX-converted, trendy-sports combat racing game that plods even on a P133.

FADE TO BLACK 94

Electronic Arts, £44.99

The follow-up to Flashback, with outstanding graphics, fancy spinny-aroundy polygon bits, and a level of difficulty that's up there with licking your own anus. Has all the elements of the original, including morphing security androids and white plimsolls - and more.

FINAL DOOM 62

GT Interactive, £44.95

Last attempt to wring yet more money from any suckers who haven't heard of Duke 3D or Quake. The levels are quite good, it sports hi-res and Internet play, and it runs under Windows 95. But really, who cares?

Flectronic Arts, £39.99

Bizarre, flawed isometric shoot 'em up.

Core Design, £39.99 Below-par, helicopter shoot 'em up with pop-up mountains. Graphics are on the dodgy side and it's virtually impossible to see more than 200 yards in front of you.

US Gold, £9.99

Beautifully animated platform game with nightmarishly hard foes and treacherous traps that will do to your tads what a Spanish chef does for a bull's. Varied ocations - including a killing gamesho but it isn't easy and the rather complicated controls only work well with a gamepad.



C FX FIGHTERS 93 Philips, £39.99

One of the best 3D beat 'em ups on the PC. Loads of moves (and those oh-sosecret moves), atmospheric graphics and fighters ranging from snappy-limbed insects hybrids to giant turd monsters (that's what it looks like to us, anyway). Cool.

HERETIC 78 iD/Raven, £39.99

Doom in tights

All prices are original manufacturers' RRP unless otherwise stated

C HEXEN 94 iD, £39.99

One stage up from Doom in terms of gameplay, it's essentially a simplified RPG with a less linear approach and an improved game engine that lets you look up and down (and, if you're not careful, throw up from motion sickness). Great-looking, extremely involving, with an eight-player deathmatch facility. And very, very hard.

THE HIVE 78 Funsoft UK, £39.99

Pre-rendered shoot 'em up. Rebel Assault without the good bits.

IMPERIAL PURSUIT 80 LucasArts, £19.99

X-Wing add-on: long, involving, 'story-driven' tour of duty.

R INFERNO 88 Ocean, £44.99

Slick space combat thingy that branches out into sub-aqua combat thingy and even planet surface hovery combat thingy. Cutscenes, reasonable graphics, fine explosions booming SFX and pilot aids galore

JUNGLE STRIKE 79 Gremlin, £39.99

Follow up to Desert Strike, only this time with more trees.

R KLIK 'N' PLAY 88 Europress, £39.99

It's not a game as such, but a game designe for Windows that lets you make the sort of sick, unpleasant action fests that you've always wanted. Neat, intuitive, and whole heaps of fun.

THE LION KING 71 Virgin, £29.99

Platform games follow Disney films as surely as dogs follow bitches in heat

MAGIC CARPET 96
Electronic Arts, £44.99

Very good mana-based shoot 'em up that's very hard and gets a bit repetitive after a while, but looks great. Maybe a score of 96 was a bit over the top though.



MAGIC CARPET 2 92 Electronic Arts, £44.99

Improved version of the first game with new monsters and scary night-time bits. Also comes with a good on-line help mode, and it's a little easier than the original. Which is good news for wusses.

MAGIC CARPET: HIDDEN WORLDS 80 Builfrog, £19.99

Add-on levels for Magic Carpet

Activision, £49.99

Rarely has stomping around the countryside in a 70-foot armour-plated monster robot, blowing the shit out of anything you take a dislike to and generally running amok been so rewarding, so spiritual, so... healing.

Sierra, £39,99

More stomping about in gigantic descendants of vacuum cleaners, except the landscape's totally flat and the opponents are rather too hard in the campaign mode.

R24 PD23



Sierra, £44.99

Same set-up and plot as (you guessed it) Metaltech: Earthsiege, Equally hard campaign mode, but here the graphics are excellent, the terrain varied and the sound effects stepped up. Complete with FMV movies and mproved game play, this is just about the best giant robot game around at the moment. Oh, and it's Windows 95-only.

MORTAL KOMBAT 3 90 GT Interactive, £44.99

The latest version of the much-hyped 'gore fest', complete with ludicrous cartoon-style blood spatters, fatality, babe-ality and friendship' finishing moves - if you can work out the multiple button presses, never mind carry them out. Fast-paced, good graphics and animation - an excellent vo-dimensional beat 'em up.

R33 PD33

THE MUPPET CD-ROM 87 Starwaye/Ocean, £39.99

Hilarious outing featuring all your favourite sock-based characters in seven average(ish) arcade/puzzle games which sparkles with Muppet humour. Includes the Swedish Chef in a simplistic Doom-rip-off, and a superb intro sequence.

R51 PD50

C NIHILIST 91 Philips, £39.99

Good-looking shoot 'em up that's basically a first-person viewed Asteroids, Loads of variety with mayhem, retro wire-frame and bizarre pool table levels, and even a bonus sub-gam of Asteroids itself. Add to this a wide range of network options, a PWEI/Dog Eat Dog oundtrack, and even an in-game option to play your own cps, and you have a minor

corker on your hands.

PINBALL WORLD 77

21st Century Entertain ment, £44.99 Make your way round the world via pinball tables. Or not.

PINBALL DREAMS 70 21st Century Entertainment, £39.99

Eight tables with lots of rendered garbage thrown in. Well, it is on CD-ROM after all...

PINBALL DREAMS 2 70

21st Century Entertainment, £19.99 Four tables, no CD-provoked extras, and thus much cheaper.

PITFALL: THE MAYAN ADVENTURE 70 Activision, £44.99

Ancient Atari VCS platform game conversion Try to stay calm.

PRAY FOR DEATH 70 Virgin Interactive, £44.95

Sub-standard beat 'em up which fails to impress. Pray for something else instead.

WAL RAGE 82 Time Warner Interactive, £39.99

Dinosaur-based beat 'em up in the sideways on viewed Streetfighter mould (except you get to use your teeth more). Good graphics, good gameplay: Jurassic Park for psychopaths.

R32 PD31

R PRINCE OF PERSIA 2 89 Broderbund, £12.99

Nice-looking platform game with pointy shoes and pyjamas.

Origin, £11.99

nder-style dogfighting, Elite-style

C PRO PINBALL: THE WEB 90 Empire Interactive, £34.99

Extremely realistic and gorgeous-looking game with a stonking soundtrack. There's only one table, but it's feature-packed - you can even nudge the table from each side and the bottom. The best pinball experience you'll be likely to get, short of buying a real Williams table.

PSYCHO PINBALL 78 Codemasters, £44.99

Okay-looking and sounding lightweight pinball game.

R97 PD93

QUAKE 96
iD Software/GT Interactive, £TBC

Quake?... Quake... Nope, it's gone. I can't really remember what this somewhat obscure little number's all about. But apparently it's quite good.

QUARANTINE 80 Gametek, £39.99

don't handle like cars, and it isn't very good. Knock off 20 from the original score.

R22 PD19

RAYMAN 76 Ubisoft, £39.99

Irritating and very unoriginal PSX converted platform game.



C REBEL ASSAULT 2 90 LucasArts/VIE, £49.99

Gorgeous graphics, good solid gameplay and 'real' live action footage combine to make another thoroughly enjoyable, pre-rendered shoot 'em up experience for those Star Wars fans among you. It even has a corker of a storyline. But if you loathe and detest the films or thought the first game was a lot of fuss and nonsense about nothing, this won't do anything to win you round.

R34 PD17, 29, 37

Acclaim/Mirage, £44.99

Nicks some ideas from other beat 'em ups and again looks nice, but still falls short.

RISE OF THE ROBOTS 88 Mirage, £44.99

Side-on beat 'em up of limited moves (and no ability to turn round) complete with lovely muscley cyborgs, that looked nice, but was too generously scored.

R US Gold, £12.99

One of the better Doom-alikes in your local gaming emporium, but nowadays that's a bit like being one of the better Pong machine-alikes.

R26 PD26

SHELLSHOCK 60

those Seurat paintings.

Eidos Interactive/Core Design, £39.99 PSX arcade tank game conrsion. Repetitive and a damn sight more pixelly than one of

R SLIPSTREAM 5000 88 Gremlin Interactive, £9.99

Futuristic 3D Hovery racing game that, as well as being top for the solo player, features a split screen two player mode. It's rather like the much-hyped Wipeout - except it run at a good speed, is very playable with PC ontrollers, and costs a whole heap less. Racey, pacey, spacey - what a joy.

S.T.O.R.M. 70 Electronic Arts, £39.99

cramble-lookalike that's very pretty when it comes to graphics, but on the gameplay side is much too hard.

STRIFE 70 Velocity/3D0, £39.99

You can talk to people in it. And it uses the old Doom engi - zzzzz.

SUPER STREETFIGHTER II TURBO 90 Gametek, £39.99

The best sideways-on viewed beat 'em up on the pc. Slick and fast, it's one of the best arcade conversions around. Chun Li's thighs never looked so large, so solid, so... scary.



R TEMPEST 2000 85 Atari, £29.99

A 15-year old Atari game gets a techno soundtrack and suddenly words like 'arcade classic' are being bandied around the office Whatever next?.

R TERMINAL VELO.
US Gold, £12.99 HINAL VELOCITY 80

The first of Apogee's 3D Realms games. Fly about in an anti-gravity sort of way, shooting everything in sight on the Magic Carpet-like levels; find the exit tunnel, warp to the next level; continue until bored.

R30 PD31

R VIE, £39.99 NATOR: FUTURE SHOCK 85

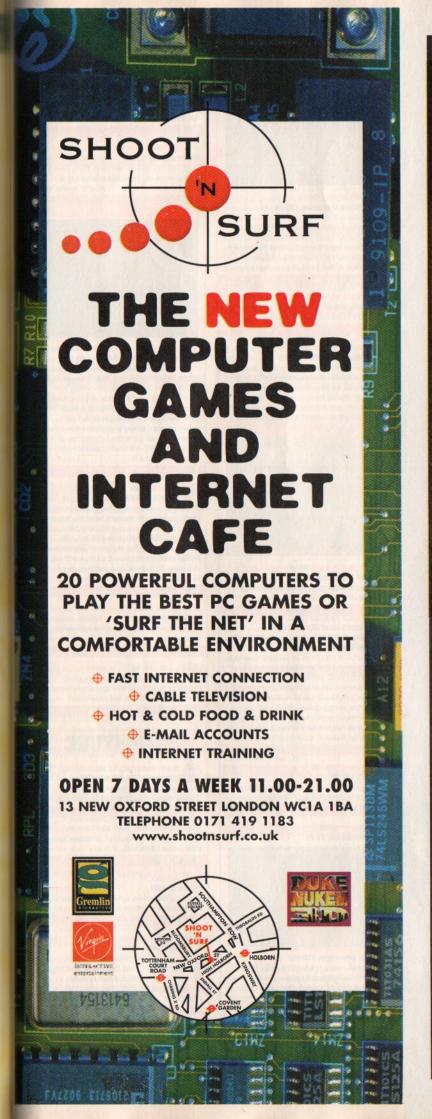
Shoot 'em up based on the first Terminate film with full freedom of movement in a true three-dimensional world. Look up and down (or die), drive cars, blow the shit out of terminators, robots and flying ships and get lost wandering around the enormous war-torn levels, which are too big for a sodding automap feature. Hence the decidedly non-classic status.

C TERRA HOVA 90 Virgin, £39.99

Stomping-about-in-robot-suits, shooting-the crap-out-of-stuff game, from the people behind System Shock. In fact, it plays like System Shock Outdoors. Complex controls and less than stunning sound effects and graphics, but despite these drawbacks is still

Electronic Arts, £44.99

Classy-looking rendered beat/hack/stab/shoot 'em up with nice backgrounds and lots of walking-about bits in which you get whisked to different eras in time to find something that may or may not be some kind of weire computer virus thing. We may never know.



AlfaTwin

control or coolie caps, make use of the second joystick (B) controls.

Utility

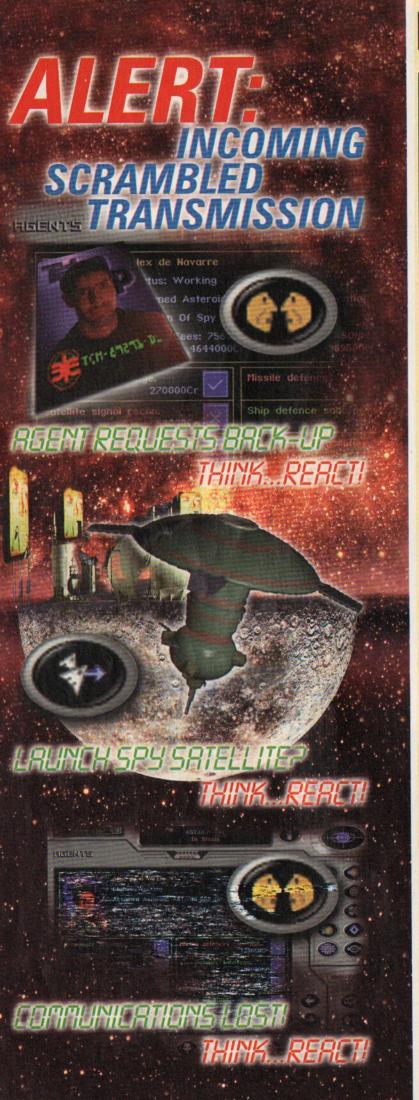
model

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Unit 65, Hallmark Trading Estate, Fourth Way, Wembley, Middx HA9 0LB Fax 0181 900 9281

Sales Hotline No: 0181 900 9291

154 ZONE





C TIE FIGHTER 94 Virgin Interactive, £49.99

Follow-up to X-Wing stuffed with loads of new features and more importantly, the chance to succumb to the Dark Side, dress up in some really cool plastic uniforms and shoot the nuts off that arsehole Luke Skywalker. If that's not overstating things.

TIE FIGHTER: DEFENDER OF THE EMPIRE 73 LucasArts, £19.99

Two new missions and a missile gunboat

R TILT 80

Virgin Interactive, £34.99

Another of the many thousands of pinball games available to people with itchy flipper fingers and no loose change. There are six tables to choose from, and various ways to view them, but it doesn't have the depth of gameplay provided by Pro Pinball: The Web.

835 PD35

TOMCAT ALLEY 34 Sega, £29.99

Fighter jets in FMV land - repetitive shite Another hit for Sega's new PC team.

TOTAL MANIA 68

Eidos Interactive/Domark, £39.99 X-COM/Crusader hybrid that looks nice but will bore your arse off.

C ULTIMATE DOOM 90 GT Interactive, £29.99

Doom with an extra episode. Buy Issue 30 and get it for free.

VIRTUA FIGHTER REMIX 89 Sega/Datatronic, £varies – bundled with Diamond Edge graphics card

Sega's arcade hit comes to your PC, thanks to the wonders of the bundled 3D graphics accelerator card, giving you superb visuals with excellent detail on the fighter sprites (you can practically check who's bothered to pluck that morning and who hasn't). But it doesn't quite match Streetfighter 2 Turbo or Mortal Kombat 3 in the pure playability stakes.

VIRTUA FIGHTER PC 79 Sega PC, £29.99

Same game, but doesn't need the accelerator card and markedly slower as a result.



WARRIORS 85 Mindscape, £9.99

Frenetic French beat 'em up, just in case you're running out of presents to buy your 12-year old sibling. It has a Playboy bunny as a hidden character, reasonable graphics and all the usual special moves along with some unusual ones, like grenades. And the obligatory (unhidden) sexy chick has a stonking great tattoo.

R27 PD27

GT Interactive, £29.99

If you really want to use your million-dollar multimedia Pentium to play conversions of prehistoric arcade games that have all the graphical sophistication of a drawing by Stevie Wonder, then this is probably the compilation for you. Arcade-perfect versions of Defender, Robotron 2084, Stargate Defender 2, Joust, Bubbles and Sinistar.

Capstone/US Gold, £39.99

Doom-clone that's as flabby and ineffectual

WING COMMANDER III 62 Electronic Arts, £59.99

Four million dollars' worth of film, linked by the same old tired and crappy space combat stuff.



Origin/Electronic Arts, £44.95

The filmed sequences - with real sets and proper actors - cost over \$8,000,000 to make, and it shows. A genuinely absorbing plot with a strong storyline provides the most complete cinematic gaming experience to date. Unfortunately, the gameplay bit is less impressive and it doesn't seem to have advanced at all since the last version. You'll also need a seriously meaty PC to attempt running it.

WITCHAVEN 88 US Gold, £29.99

Doom-style hack 'em up. No jessie-ish firing spells from a safe distance here; it's hand-tohand combat all the way. Midway between Heretic and Ultima Underworld (but better than Heretic). Similar to Hexen - experience points, goblins, trolls and all that devilish malarkey. Fast, ferocious, and very, very bloody indeed.

R33 PD33

WITCHAVEN 2 72 US Gold, £29.99

More like an add-on disk than a sequel in its own right.

C X-WING 90 LucasArts, £44.95

Excellent Star Wars-based space combat game that spawned a myriad of offshoots.

R2 PD17, 29

ADVENTURE

ALONE IN THE DARK 3 95 Infogrames, £34.99 (compilation

AITD 3 was supposedly the last in the trilogy, except that Time Gate could easily be AITD 4. Available as a budget compilation

containing all three AITD games and given the difficulty level, this delivers approximately five years of gameplay for your money. Barg-ola!

R21, 23 PD24

ALIEN ODYSSEY 77 Philips, £44.99

Plodding but pretty adventure; a sort of Bioforge/Cyberia hybrid.

R33 PD33

AZRAEL'S TEAR 90 Mindscape, £44.99

Atmospheric blend of two first-person viewed classics, Ultima Underworld and Syste Shock with yet another Knights Templar theme. Engaging, tricky, but ultimately very



Point-and-click adventure featuring all the

regular characters from the series. Featuring snappy and amusing dialogue, some unusual sub-games (hawking on passers-by, for example) and plenty of puzzle-solving for adventure game traditionalists. Unlikely to appeal if you're not a fan, but a must-buy if

R35 PD35

BIG RED ADVENTURE 70

Core Design, £39.99 Follow-up to Nippon Safes, only not as bad.

R25 PD24

BIOFORGE 95 Electronic Arts, £44.99

ning-looking, action-packed adventure game with built-in unarmed (and armed) ombat entirely free of charge. Extremely difficult, and with more gadgets to interact with than an evening at The Torture Garden, its tension derives from the 'race against time scenario'.

R25 PD26

BURIED IN TIME 77 US Gold, £44.99

Technically impressive Journeyman Project sequel that lacks a little gameplay.

R31 PD30



One of the better interactive movie-type adventures. It has good pacing, a sharp plot and plenty of variety in the gameplay. Also wins Most Unlikely Use Of A Colon In Game Title award.

BROKEN SWORD 84 Virgin Interactive, £44.99

'Interactive cartoon' from the team who brought you Beneath A Steel Sky. Gameplay ends toward lengthy conversations thanks to an icon-based speech interface which doesn't allow you to phrase questions yourself. Gorgeous scenery, and well worth a look - more than a match for many of the FMV interactive movies around.

CHRONICLES OF THE Psygnosis, £39.99 NICLES OF THE SWORD 68

ring adventure puzzler set in the time of King Arthur.

ANDER BLOOD 81 Mindscape, £44.99

Nice-looking young chit of a thing, as far as it goes, but it asks a bit too much of the person playing it. It's very weird, like a sort of French Twin Peaks, and it doesn't really give you much idea of what you're supposed to be doing. But it draws you in.

COMPANIONS OF XANTH 84 Accolade, £39.99

Short-lived but diverting adventure – almost as much fun as the Friends of John McCarthy.

TURE SHOCK 78 Virgin, £44.99

Pre-rendered shoot 'em up in "fails to score highly shock".

CYCLONE 78 Mindscape, £44.99

R26 PD22

Another Doom clone from the people behind Heretic. You can fly and look up and down, which is bloody marvellous.

DAEDALUS ENCOUNTER 58 Virgin, £44.99 Tia Carrera's in it. And it's shite

FALL 65

Virgin Interactive/Bethesda, £44.95 Attempt at an open-ended D&D jobbie, that

ends up just being a jobbie.



Cyberdreams, £44.99

HR Geiger-inspired, challenging adventure with against-the-clock-style gameplay. Macabre - and scarier than a naked Bernard Manning.

DARK SUN II: WAKE OF THE RAVAGER 80 Mindscape, £44.99

Like most SSI offerings, it's about as graphically sophisticated as the Bayeux Tapestry but AD&D fans will love its RPG

DAY OF THE TENTACLE 87 LucasArts, £39,99

A very taxing adventure with very American humour which isn't quite up to the standard of the classic LucasArts offerings that we

R7 PD17



THE DIG 87 LucasArts/VIE, £44.99

A return to the good old days of classic point-and-click adventures for LucasArts, although it doesn't actually reach the heights of Indiana Jones, Monkey Island or Sam And Max. A good, involving story, a fair amount of atmosphere, and it's not too difficult to get through.

R34 PD32



Psygnosis, £49.99

A staggeringly high score for this very difficult adventure game based around the books of Terry Pratchett. It's funny, if you like the boy Pratchett's humour. Claims at the time that it was the best adventure ever made seem a trifle over the top now. but it's still extremely entertaining - and very, very hard.

R22 PD23



DRAGON LORE 81 Mindscape, £44.99

Nice-looking, great-sounding pre-rendered adventure with Ultima Underworld-style combat that has you spending an awfully long time walking about in empty scenery, but when it gets going, is quite engrossing. Tricky stuff, though.

DUNGEON MASTER 2 59 Interplay, £44.99

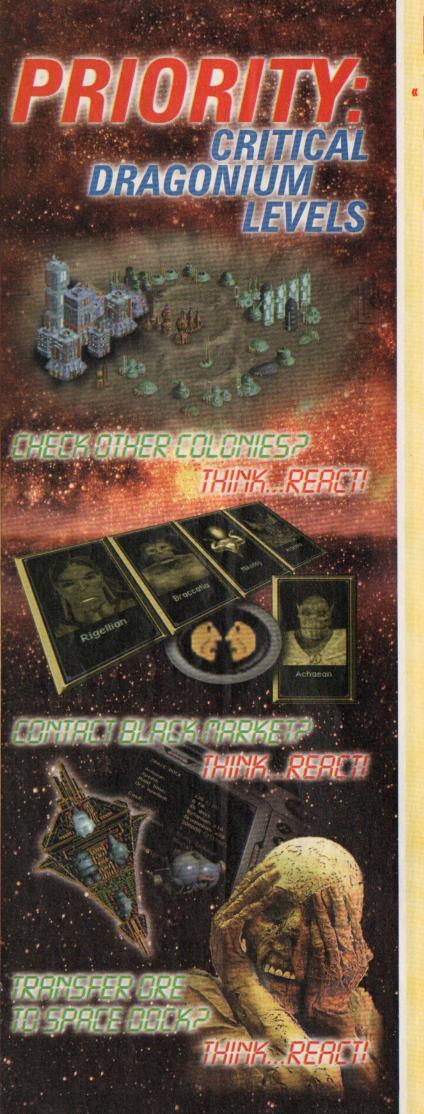
Took its time getting here, and went straight into the bin.



C ECSTATICA 93 Psygnosis, £44.99

Alone In The Dark-style gameplay with ellipsoid-generated characters, no inventory and a far higher pert buttocks-count. Difficult, with some tricky puzzles, and the constant running away can be wearing until you get some serious pointy weaponry, but still good nonetheless.





Mindscape, £44.99

Good story; lacklustre presentation. A poor man's Ultima VII.

IGH THE EYES OF Interplay, £44.99

Excellent gothic adventure, hampered by extremely dodgy interface.



FILL THROTTLE 92 LucasArts/Virgin, £44.99

Main biker-guy character has a voice so deep it makes Lee Marvin sound like John Inman Unfortunately has a god-awful sub-Road Rash arcade beat 'em up on bikes bit in the middle which spoils the flow of the whole thing. That said, it's a cool point-and-clicker.

27 PD 26

GABRIEL KNIGHT 90 Sierra On-Line, £44.99

The lovely Tim Curry does the voice for the hero in a louche camp style (now there's a surprise) in this tense, and some would say brooding, atmospheric thriller.

GABRIEL KNIGHT 2: THE BEAST WITHIN 88 Sierra, £44.99

Well-acted FMV-based interactive movie with a complex plot that actually has a fair bit of gameplay, although it's not the hardest game you'll ever come across.

THE GENE MACHINE 87 Vic Tokai, £44.99

Pleasant point-and-clicker in the style of the LucasArts classics, except that it's British. Nice backdrops, a very interesting HG Wells/Jules Verne storyline set in the 19th Century, and humour that will make you smile. Puzzles may be a tad easy for rockhard adventurers, but immensely enjoyable

HARVESTER 83 Virgin Interactive, £39.99

Despite lorry-loads of FMV footage, Harvester provides plenty of traditional, old-fashioned adventurey gameplay. Those with sensitive stomachs may find it all a bit gore-tastic; the politically correct may object to the slightly voyeuristic shots of a chick hanging around in suspenders and undies; those who don't care either way will find proper puzzles, an involving plot, and interesting sub-plots.

INDIANA JONES AND THE FATE OF

LucasArts, £12.99 Budget, all-talkie version of one of the best adventures ever made. Three ways to play, depending on how hard you want to think, whether you like an occasional bout of fisticuffs, or whether you want a bit of help from sidekick Sophia. Still a great game.

INDIANA JONES AND HIS DESKTOP ADVENTURES 80 LucasArts, £39.99

Weird desktop adventure game-cum Windows 'toy' that you can load whenever you want to try your hand at a number of mini-puzzles featuring the eponymous whip wielder. You're given a small world, an objective and some hints, and it's up to you to sort things out. So insidious you might well never work again.

R%1 PD%0

some time in.

LOST EDEN 76

Virgin, £34.99

meets Dragon Lore.

POLIS 79

Electronic Arts, £44.99

US Gold, £39.99

point-and-clicker.

R SCI, £44.99

Sierra, £44.99

game character.

R 23, 40

R KYRANDIA 3 87 Virgin, £29.99

Pretty, LucasArts-style, old-fashioned

DM O'MAGIC 82

at times, but would have been better

Point-and-click adventure. Can be amusing

without the stereotypical minorities and the

huge-breasted chick. (Actually, the latter is

Excellent adventure game with some mind-

ogres, tries to be cuter than Hathaway out of

boggling puzzles, marred only by the fact

that everyone, even the supposedly evil

ER's top lip. Which is fine for a lip, but

slightly squirm-inducing in a computer

Good quality adventure, now available as

Anniversary Pack, along with the first two

games (Legend Of Kyrandia, Hand Of Fate) and Dune II and Lands Of Lore. Well worth 30

part of the Westwood Studios 10th

ER MAN 77

Pretty movie, shame about the gameplay

Pretty-looking, gorgeously animated, isometrically-viewed adventure. Quite hard

and the auto-save feature can be a complete

Interactive dinosaur storybook - Jurassic Park

pain in the arse, but well worth investing

Sales Curve Interactive, £54.99

Electronic Arts, £44.99

probably a moot point for some of you.)

G MORMALITY 90 Gremlin Interactive, £44.99 Ambitious point-and-clicker with first person viewpoint that can drone on a bit at times but has its fans in the office. The hero's a bit of a dork, but at least it's trying

Weird, gothic horror superhero adventure



Virgin/Access, £44.95

The nice-looking follow-up to Under A Killing Moon features the same private dick hero, and is an engrossing, FMV-based adventure with decent puzzles and an absorbing plot. As such, it's rarer than a Bulgarian with a bald back. And as there are three different paths through the game, it's VFM as well as FMV. It also comes with a novel based on the game, which, if you read it first (and apparently it's quite good) will

spoil it completely.

Sierra, £49.99

teractive movie that somehow forgot all about the interactive bit.

POLICE QUEST IV: OPEN SEASON 80 Sierra On-Line, £44.99

Another in the long line of procedurallybased cop games. Walk about, take notes, eat doughnuts, beat Rodney King to a bloody pulp. It's all in a day's work at LAPD headquarters.

POLICE QUEST: SWAT 83 Sierra, £49.99

If you wanna make it as a SWAT Team mber, ya gotta practice. And practice. And practice. Gun-toting cop fun, still procedurally heavy but only needs light-gun compatibility to make it perfect.

PRISONER OF ICE 88 Infogrames, £44.95

The second in Infogrames' Cthulhu-based series of point-and-click adventures; follow

up to Shadow Of The Comet. Good plot, good atmosphere.

R29 PD31

QUEST FOR FAME 80 IBM, £49.95

This music biz-based adventure uses Aerosmith's tunes and has you playing your way from obscurity to megastardom, using a plastic plectrum you can strum on a tennis racket, a spaghetti strainer or even your partner's pubic hair, if you want. Strum well rough to succeed and you'll end up playing with Aerosmith themselves... which may be a mixed blessing.

REALMS OF ARKANIA: STAR TRAIL 85 US Gold, £44.99

You'd never guess from the title, but it's an RPG. Oh, alright then. The sequel to Blade Of Destiny, it's old-fashioned stuff and no mistake: party-forming, spell-casting, sometric scrapping, bosomy damsel ogling. gnarly-fingernailed ones will love it.

RETURN TO ZORK 90 Activision, £45.99

One of the first good adventures to use FMV footage effectively without compromising any of the gameplay.

Prism, £19.99

Original but flawed survival game in which you utilise your wits, your huge range of prescription drugs and your hand-to-hand combat skills. The only game ever to give you the option to amputate your own limbs

SAM AND MAX HIT THE ROAD 93 US Gold, £12.99

An all-time high point in point-and-click adventures. You control the eponymous heroes (a dog and rabbit Freelance Police team) in their pursuit of Trixie the Giraffe-Necked Girl who's been abducted from a freak show. All-talkie with a funny script and a good mix of puzzles. LucasArts at its very best: an essential purchase at this price.

R SERPENT ISLE: ULTIMA VII PART 2 89 Origin, £34.99 Origin's flair for storytelling and

atmosphere makes this a corker of an RPG.

SHADOW OF THE COMET 88 Virgin White Label, £12.99

Decent all-talkie adventure based on HP Lovecraft's Cult Of The Cthulu books. A case of nvolving storyline winning out over less than top-notch presentation, but in spite of the odd fault Lovecraft fans will love it.

Millennium/Psygnosis, £39.99

That's seven. Out of a hundred. Or approximately £5.71 per point.

SIMON THE SORCEROR 2 84 AdventureSoft, £29.99

Simon the Ginger-Haired, Pony-Tailed Foppy Sorceror (to give him his full title) returns with DMs and another batch of smart-arsed iokes, Chris Barrie-less (as if anyone cares). it's still a good all-talkie point-and-clicker. Now available in a complete budget package with the prequel and a free (really disgusting) T-shirt.

SPACE QUEST 6 70 Sierra, £44.99

Trite adventure (set... you know where) completely devoid of humour and

imagination.



SPYCRAFT 91 Activision, £49.99

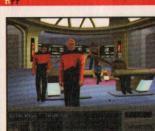
Windows 95-only 'spy simulator'. Unfortunately free of fast cars, birds in wimsuits and spectacular stunts, but loads of FMV and chocka with puzzles, spy satellites, devious decoding routines and many many original features. Thoroughly engrossing and jolly good fun.

STAR TREK: DEEP SPACE 9 HARBINGER 52 Viacom, £39.99

Even diehard Trekkies won't get much out of this Windows 95-only turkey. (Cue bag loads of whiney letters: "It's not Trekkies, it's Trekkers." Yeah, right.)

STAR TREK: JUDGEMENT RITES 70 Virgin Interactive, £12.99 Kirk era point-and-clicker with lots of space

combat thrown in.



G STAR TREK TNG: A FINAL UNITY 94 MicroProse, £49.99

There are verily shitloads of Star Trek adventure games, but this one, it has to be said, is the best. If your the kind of person who likes sticking a pasty on your forehead and prancing about with your trousers tucked in your chelsea boots, this is the one for you

R27 PD27

Interplay, £44.99

Dated flick-screen RPG, best kept under a stone Arf arf.

R34 PD33

G SYSTEM SHOCK 95 Electronic Arts/Origin, £11.99

Wonderful, atmospheric, first-person viewed action adventure game with a cyberpunk

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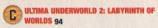
tinge. Basically, it's like Ultima Underworld in space. And available on budget.

R20 PD21, 28



From the team that, in the past, brought you the Alone In The Dark series comes a game that looks remarkably like Alone In The Dark. Knights Templar-based fun, with all the joys - and of course the faults - of Alone In The Darks 1-3.

R36 PD36



Origin, £44.95

Superb, first-person viewed adventure that's never been matched.

UNDER A KILLING MOON 70 US Gold. £12.99

eractive movie on four CDs featuring Margot Kidder, James Earl Jones, loads of acting, a lot of digitised backgrounds and, just about detectable, the faintest whiff of gameplay.

R19 PD19



Warner Interactive, £39.99

Interactive movie? Or game? Only Our Lord Baby Jesus can really tell.

R39

ZORK NEMESIS 65 Activision, £44,99

Return To Zork follow-up abandons any sort of gameplay entirely and instead,opts for a Myst-like approach.

DRIVING

BIG RED RACING 87 Domark, £39.99

Very much like a first-person perspective Micro Machines, it has you haring about all over the shop in lots of different wacky vehicles (snow ploughs, monster trucks etc) and you can even recreate The Italian Job in

R37 PD40



DESTRUCTION DERBY 90 Sony Interactive, £44.99

A cross between a racing game and smash 'em up where you chalk up more points for wrecking opponents' cars than for winning a race. Great graphics and initially exhilarating, but one-player gameplay isn't the deepest you'll ever find. Plenty of network options, though.

R33 PD34



Comprehensive simulation that has you hanging from your Ron Dennis 'standing up' frame and managing a Formula 1 team through an on-going Championship, taking charge of everything from tyre deals and team sponsorship to the hiring and firing of prima-donna drivers. Guaranteed absolute F1 anorak heaven.

FORMULA 1 GRAND PRIX 92 MicroProse, £14.99

The classic F1 racing game, now available in a number of compilations or on its own. Still great after all these years.

FORMULA 1 GRAND PRIX 2 95 MicroProse, £30.00

Superb upgrade to the classic racing game with menus and set-up screens to tinker about with to your heart's content, and the game engine is unmatched anywhere To get the textured graphics in all their full glory you're going to need a decent Pentium, but it still looks very good and is playable even in low-res.

R FATAL RACING 88 Gremlin Interactive, £39.99

Full-contact arcade driving game like a cross between Ridge Racer and the ancient Amiga classic, Stunt Car Racer. Excellent graphics and 16 tracks, some of which are spectacular, Unfortunately, it looks crap on anything less than a Pentium.

R HI-OCTANE 83

Anti-gravity racing game based on the Magic Carpet engine with lots of shooting of opponents, but a disconcertingly short view ahead of your car/truck/hovery thing (just like in Magic Carpet, in fact).

C INDYCAR RACING 93 Virgin Interactive, £9.99

Definitive simulation of the art of racing about in circles with almost all the same ingredients as the sequel; now available on budget in a number of compilations or on its own for a tenner

INDYCAR RACING EXPANSION PACK 94 Virgin Interactive, £17.99

Five excellent extra tracks (and one more undabout) for your collection. Of course, it would have been nice if they'd been in the



C INDYCAR 2 90 Papyrus/Virgin, £34.99

Follow-up to the first oval circuit racing game which really doesn't add much to the original. It does have glorious SVGA graphics, but if you already possess Indycar 1 there's little reason to buy this, as well Get F1GP2 instead.

R34 PD34

IEGARACE 2 - 79 Mindscape, £44.95

ement on the original (which, lets face it, isn't hard) but there are loads of better driving games around - and they aren't "on rails'

Codemasters, £44.99

Brilliant sequel with different tracks and the same instant appeal. Also comes complete with a nifty little track designer that enables you to race across the naked body of our mother (or something)

Res PDes

R NASCAR RACING 84 Virgin, £44.99

Roundabout racing in armour-plated saloon cars from the people who brought you

R93 PD99

R NEED FOR SPEED 89 Electronic Arts, £44.99

Race extremely expensive cars down the ongest stretches of highway in America without a turn-off, skid about to leave

rubber on the road, crash spectacularly.. then do it all again. Or look at the multimeeja bits, showing how obscenely expensive your car really is, 300-style crash and burn action comes to the PC.

R31 PD31

SCREAMER 89 VIE, £29.99

Good-looking, fast-moving arcade driving game with six different tracks, six different supercars, manual or automatic options and three different skill levels. Very arcadey approach, down to the time bonuses on stages. Unfortunately, this also means that you can't go round the circuits the wrong way or get up to any of the other zany things wacky characters love. Good stuff, though.

RAS PDSS

SPEED HASTE 79

Electronic Arts, £29.99 Cross between Virtua Racing and Daytona but not as good.

R SUPERKARTS 82 Virgin Interactive, £29.99

The PC's attempt at Super Mario Kart, now available (with IndyCar Racing and F1GP 1) on the White Lines compilation. Fast-moving, arcade action all the way, complete with a network option.

TRACK ATTACK 65 MicroProse, £29.99

Abysmally slow-moving arcade racer with dodgy controls.

R TEAM F1 88 Electronic Arts, £39.99

F1 management game that's even more comprehensive than FIGP Manager. Starting from scratch, you are responsible for everything from bank loans, R&D, sponsors, wind tunnel and engine testing through to office expansion, manufacturing contracts and even industrial espionage. A bit fiddly and confusing, especially as it's played against the clock, but well worth the slog all the same.

VIRTUAL KARTS 71

MicroProse, £44.95 Featuring karts that handle like

supertankers, in hi-res jerko-vision R35 PD37

WIPEOUT 78

Sony Interactive, £44.99

Ineffectual conversion of top PlayStation anti-gravity racing game.

PUZZLES

THE 7TH CHEST CO

Trilobyte, £44.99

ous-looking puzzle game with weak gameplay in the style of Myst.

THE 11TH HOUR 67 Trilobyte/VIE, £49.99

Follow-up to 7th Guest with more puzzles in fancy settings.

ALL NEW WORLD OF LEMMINGS 78

Digital Integration, £39.99 Except it isn't really that new

BAKU BAKU ANIMAL 90 Sega PC, £29.99

Sega's PC boys finally come good in a big way with the coolest puzzle game around. Tetris or Puvo Puvo-style play has you matching up cutesy animals and their food to clear the screen. Great fun in single-player, with a fab two-player single-screen

option and a kicking soundtrack, it's more addictive than crack.

THE EVEN MORE INCREDIBLE MACHINES

Dynamix, £39.99

More top-notch puzzling fun with sprockets and cogs.

R10 PD99

FURY OF THE FURRIES 85 Mindscape3, £39.99

Interesting platform puzzler, not for the easily frustrated.

THE INCREDIBLE MACHINES 84 Dynamix, £39.99

Manipulate and arrange Mousetrap-style combinations of gadgets, tools and bits and pieces from the nether regions of your shed to set up chain reactions and solve puzzles. Enjoyable stuff.

LEMMINGS 3D 71

Psygnosis, £39.99 me game, different angle

R31 PD99

C LITTL DIVIL 90 Gremlin, £34.99

Excellent puzzle game with an element of adventuring, put together with wit and considerable flair

R12 18 PD16

MONTY PYTHON AND THE HOLY GRAIL 69 7th Level, £39.99

Mildly diverting, if over-familiar, puzzlebased interactive picture book of the film. Sort of.

MYST 67

Electronic Arts, £44.99 Puzzle game set amid pretty backdrops. Mac

owners like it. SHANGHAI II: DRAGON'S EYE 88

games for Windows, featuring differen

Excellent collection of Mah Jongg

set-ups for the tiles.

SOLITAIRE'S JOURNEY 87 Mirage, £44.99 105 different solitaire card games and five different ways to play them, for people with

no friends in the entire world.

SIMULATION

1942: PACIFIC AIR WAR 89 MicroProse, £44.99

Takes the decent naval strategy game Carrie Battles and adds a full-blown flight sim with pretty good flight models so that you can fly the missions yourself. Blimey O'Reilly - two games in one.

ACES OF THE DEEP 90 Dynamix/Sierra, £39.99

Superb U-Boat simulation that's got the lot: the unbearable tension; the long silences; the smell of other people's armpits in recycled air; the chance to torpedo shipfuls of Scouse babies. Who in their right mind could ask for more?

C AH-64D LONGBOW 90 Electronic Arts. £44.99

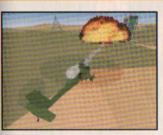
Great-looking chopper sim with good music and a great interface that tries to be ame before anything else. Be warned: even on a P133 it can go all jerk-o in hi-res, and it needs 97Mb hard disk space. And there's no network play either. But it looks and plays absolutely fab.

AIR POWER 84 R Mindscape, £44.99

Another flight sim set in a parallel universe

from Rowan, combining between the warstype aircraft with a fantasy strategy game in which you have to use planes, launched from airships, to take over the country.

R30 PD31



PACHE LONGBOW 96 Digital Integration, £39.99

The best helicopter flight model around which means it's remarkably easy to roast your bony ass in a collision with Mother Earth. Nothing comes close to matching it for authenticity, tactical planning and spot-on handling. Flat-shaded polygon graphics won't exactly wow you though, and if it's arcade thrills and spills you want, go for Comanche vs Werewolf.

RS1 PDSn

ARMORED FIST 86 US Gold/Novalogic, £29.99

The good-looking, sophisticated tank sim that sounds like a very scary sex aid. Comanche on wheels. Er, tracks. You know what we mean.

C ATF 92 Electronic Arts, £44.99

Take a seriously spruced-up US Navy Fighters engine combined with a large number of 'conceptual' planes with different flight nodels; add an interactive reference guide courtesy of Jane's and a complex missionbuilding option and you get a seriously good flight sim for propeller-heads everywhere.

C COMANCHE 90

Novalogic, £29.99 Great-looking, arcade chopper action. Now available on World Of Combat compilation, with Armored Fist and Wolfpack.

MANCHE VS WEREWOLF 88 Novalogic/US Gold, £39.99

Take the original Comanche chopper game, then chuck in all the add-on missions and a completely new extra game which lets you play two-player modem or serial link-up attles. Not the best flight model around, propeller-head purists will sneer, but it's a jolly good arcade blast with some mighty fine graphics.

R DAWN PATROL 80 Empire Interactive, £44.99

Nice-looking WWI flight sim that lays claim to being an 'interactive book'. In other words, you sit through a lot of other garbag between dogfights.

R91 PD91

C EF2000 97 Ocean/DID, £49.99

The flight sim with something for everyone from complex missions in an on-going war scenario to jump-right-in-and-start-blasting arcade thrills. Based on a plane that isn't even finished yet, the flight model's so good they're using it to train pilots. But you can make things as easy as you like, and the graphics are fab too.

R31 PD32

R F14 FLEET DEFENDER 86 MicroProse, £44.99 Heavyweight flight sim; Tornado is better.

R FAST ATTACK 86

Sierra, £39.99 Ultra-complex but extremely rewarding Windows 95-only submarine sim. Newcomers to the genre might find it a bit too much of a mare to deal with, so don'

come running to us if you suddenly find your ship sinking.

C FLIGHT SIMULATOR 5 90 Microsoft, £35.00 Great-looking simulation that actually teaches you how to fly. Lovers of mayhem will find it low on baby carriage/napalm

interaction.

HORNET NAVAL STRIKE FIGHTER 80 Spectrum Holobyte, £44.99

Electronic Battlefield System (EBS) add-on for Falcon 3, allowing you to fly eponymous plane in network scraps or alternatively, in standalone missions



C HIND 90 Digital Integration, £44.99

It's from DI, so you already know it's going to be a seriously heavy simulation. The emphasis is on hyper-realism rather than flashy, memory-hungry presentation so it will run on low-spec machines, but it's harder than juggling atoms. Loads of multiplay options though (serial link-up, modem and network play) so you can die among friends.

R KA-50 HOKUM 85

Virgin, £39.99 Excellent helicopter flight sim based around the ubiquitous, extremely effective Russian chopper. Very realistic and therefore very

hard to fly properly.

C NAVY STRIKE 90

Empire Interactive, £44.99 Two games in one: a flight sim, where you pilot a jet fighter in the slightly scary future, and a military command sim. Very atmospheric, it's one that grows on you the more you play it.

R PACIFIC STRIKE 80 Electronic Arts, £39.99

Good stuff. Strike Commander game engine and graphics, but set in WWII Pacific campaign. Needs a P90 to run smoothly

full with still photographs and video

REDSHIFT 95 Maris Multimedia, £59.00 A stunning astronomy program crammed

at the stars. And no, we do not mean the cast of Emmerdale. R SEA WOLF 83

Hugely atmospheric submarine sim with a

Electronic Arts, £44.99

sequences that even lets you stand, for

example, on the surface of Pluto and gaze

control interface from hell.

SILENT HUNTER 90 SSI/Mindscape, £39.99

Superb WWII sub sim that's got the lot: cat-and-mouse stuff, creaking hulls, big explosions, depth charge attacks, blokes in

chunky polo-neck sweaters... Superb, atmospheric stuff.

SILENT THUNDER 60 Sierra, £39.99

Nice-looking follow-up to A10 Tank Killer, in stunning jerk-o-vision

SPACE SIMULATOR 75

Microsoft, £39,99 It simulates space. Which is probably overreaching itself a bit. Get RedShift instead.

SU27 FLANKER 95 Mindscape, £44.95

Comprehensive flight sim based on the scariest aircraft ever built. Features the best flight model around, developed with input from top Russian pilots, but has less than dazzling graphics. Aimed at serious propeller-heads rather than those seeking lightweight thrills and spills (the instrument panels are even in Cyrillic script). No network or serial-link multiplay options, but a better simulation than EF2000.

MiG29 or Tornado. R34 PD33

SUBWAR 2050 88 MicroProse, £44.99

Futuristic submarine game that's comes out like a slow-motion flight sim. Good fun, though. Apparently.

R TFX 80 Ocean, £44.99 Near-future flight sim with graphics and sound that still stand up today.

C TOP GUN 92 Mindscape, £44.99 An outstanding flight sim with a cinematic storyline and loads of tense atmosphere, it's let down slightly by misleading views and a hi-res frame rate on a P133 like a supertanker performing a U-turn.

Still good, though. R37 PD38 50

C TORNADO 93 Digital Integration, £44.99

Still some kind of benchmark for an indepth flight sim, Tornado is so deep you'll need a bathysphere. Low-level attack simwith excellent ground visuals that's definitely not for beginners.

Electronic Arts, £44.99

One of the best-looking, most accurate

flight sims around, lacking only a multi-

C US NAVY FIGHTERS 90

player facility.



US MARINE FIGHTERS 92 Electronic Arts, £19.99

Add-on disk for US Navy Fighters, featuring US and Yank Harriers, Yaks, the Russian supersonic Harrier rival and a gunship version of a Hercules transport plane. Great stuff, but still no network mode

WINGS OF GLORY 78 Electronic Arts, £44.99

Good-looking WWI flight sim with tendency towards jerk-o-vision

SPORT

C ACTUA SOCCER 92 Gremlin Interactive, £34.99

Arcade action featuring all the major national teams (and Wales). Excellent graphics, thanks to a 3D polygonised pitch rrangement and more camera angles than a BBC costume drama. And despite one or two large faults in the gameplay (the player selection when defending is shite, and the goalies are quadraplegics), it's still the best of a poor bunch of PC footy games.

R34 RD34 PD35

CHAMPIONSHIP MANAGER 2 92 Domark, £44.99

The finest football management game ever made. Every team in England, thousands of players from all over the world, minutely adjustable playing styles and formations. The only management game where you actually feel that what you're doing has an effect: other games are games, this is real life. More addictive than an illicit substance

CHAMPIONSHIP MANAGER 2 DATA DISKS

Domark, £19.99 See above for the addiction factor. With a similar core of foreign players, but for the German, Italian, Spanish, French and Dutch/Belgian leagues. Get out there and buy an elegant raincoat.



EURO 96 70 Gremlin, £29.99

FIFA SOCCER CD-ROM 78 Electronic Arts, £34.99 Old, big-sprite FIFA with commentary by Mr J

Collections: Sport compilation, with PGA

Motson. Available in the Essential

Or Actua Soccer Again. Not enough to warrant

Tour 486 and FIGP. R FIFA '96 84

another full-price game.

Electronic Arts, £44.95 FIFA gets the Virtual Stadium treatment with multiple camera angles, motioncaptured players and a cardboard crowd. All major international teams are included. along with a great league option using club sides in many countries. Still has an overcomplicated control system though, and players do too much without your input. And your team changes aren't saved from game to game either, which is a wind-up.

FRONT PAGE SPORTS BASEBALL 85 Dynamix/Sierra, £44.99 Nicks all the best features from all the other

FRONT PAGE SPORTS FOOTBALL PRO 85 Dynamix/Sierra, £44.99 The best American football game on the PC. combining a superb play-designer, great graphics, multiple camera angles and good

baseball games around and combines them,

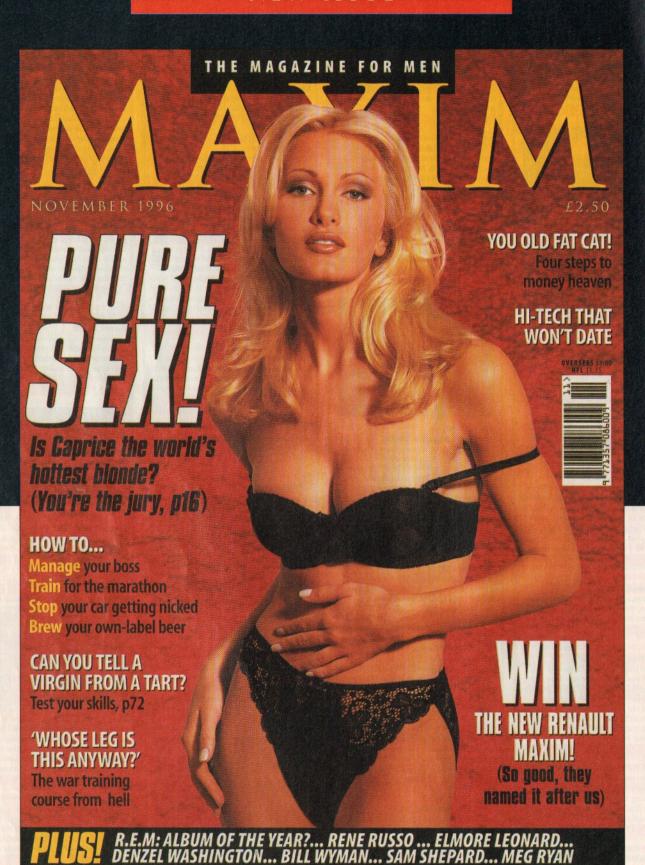
to make the best of its kind around. It comes

out every year with different features.

HARDBALL 4 83 Accolade/Warner, £39.99

arcade action.

Good-looking, very playable baseball game, but it's not as good as FPS Baseball.



On sale 3 October

Beam, £34,99

For those of you gagging for a PC cricket sim, this is a good, playable conversion of snes hit, with unnecessary and crap FMV footage.

Philips, £44.99 IAL TENNIS OPEN 88

The PC's premier tennis game boasts FMV players, but also has an idiosyncratic ontrol system which is rather too difficult to come to terms with - so much so that you have the option of not even playing the shots yourself.

after all these years.

MINY WHITE'S WHIRLWIND SNOOKER 80

Hit Squad, £14.99 Still the best snooker game around on the PC

KICK OFF 3: EUROPEAN CHALLENGE 70 Anco, £29.99

The best Kick Off game to date - which isn't saying much.

C LINKS LS 94 EIDOS Interactive, £44.95

The long-awaited re-vamp to the world's greatest golf sim gives you more gameplay ptions, even more gorgeous graphics and re-designed menu and view-selection wstem, making it better than ever. No other software house else has managed to get a golf ball moving as realistically round a screen as it does in this. Thankfully it includes a built-in upgrader for all those old data-disk courses you spent your well-earned wodge on in the distant past.

C NBA LIVE 95 90 EA, £34.99

Good basketball sim, presented in FIFA sometric style. Pre-Virtual Stadium, so the crowd looks good too.

R NBA LIVE 96 85 EA, £44.99

Basketball gets the Virtual Stadium treatment: multiple angles for each camera, an expanded polystyrene crowd, three levels of difficulty and all the usual season play options. A touch muted graphically, and can be just a little bit confusing when it



C NHL HOCKEY '96 90 Electronic Arts, £44.99

EA's ice hockey game gets its annual upgrade of stats and player names along with its own Virtual Stadium, complete with unconvincing crowd. Excellent nimation and multiple camera angles. Fine detailing means the players even have little reflections on the ice. Controlled violence has never been so pretty.

OVERLORD 85 Virgin Interactive, £39.99

WWII flight sim based around - you guessed it - Operation Overlord (also known as the D-Day landings). Features mainly ground attack missions with the odd dog fight or bomber intercept, has two padlock

PGA TOUR GOLF 486 91 Electronic Arts, £34.99

Excellent-looking, great-playing, finesmelling golf game, available in the Essential Collections: Sport compilation with FIFA Soccer and FIGP.

PGA TOUR '96 94 Electronic Arts, £44.99

Two different courses, and new Links-inspired windows that provide extra views of the action. Main view graphics now look less sharp than last year's model but give more sense of depth. If you're not that bothered about having the latest version, last year's game is cheaper, has more courses and loses nothing in gameplay.

PGA EUROPEAN TOUR 94 Electronic Arts, £44.99

Finally, a game featuring the people who won the Ryder Cup rather than the also-rans. A different development team has tweaked the ball physics so it responds better to the contours, which makes it the best arcade golf game around at the moment, And it's Yank-free.

SENSIBLE WORLD OF SOCCER 60 Warner Interactive, £39.99

Delayed so long that by the time it came out the world had moved on.

R34 PD35

R TNN BASS TOURNAMENT 80 Electronic Arts, £39.99

Fishing tournament game that's more to do with amassing money than the joy of hooking big floppy gilled things and dragging them about for fun. Trophy Bass is better.

TROPHY BASS 85 Sierra, £39.99

Near-perfect simulation of the noble art, concerned more with the purity of thought and deed than the baser elements of money-grabbing tournaments. Comes with a voucher for a free bag of chips.

C VIRTUAL POOL 91 Interplay, £44.99

Superbly implemented pool sim with intuitive controls and a multi-player network apart from the little piles of coins on the side of the table. (And only 90 times the price.)

R98 PD97

Interplay, £34.99

Identical to Virtual Pool, only with more balls and FMV of a Steve Davis 147 break.

STRATEGY

ACROSS THE RHINE 86 MicroProse, £44.99

Tank-based battle strategy game which takes a while to come to terms with thanks to a heavy-duty manual and a less-than-intuitiv multi-view interface. Complete lack of hexes, lots of digitised footage of tanks and tankers. Great depth if you can get your head round it.

AFTERLIFE 88 Virgin/LucasArts, £44.99

God game modelled on Sim City in which you actually play God, 'zoning' areas of punishment and reward for the souls who come under your charge. Liberal helpings of humour, along with good longevity in

the gameplay, mean you don't have to be Billy Graham to enjoy it either. Things to

do in Sim City when you're dead.

AIV NETWORKS 80 Infogrames, £44.99

deep end of corporation manage Not nearly as easy to get into as the Maxis titles, unless you're a budding mover and shaker who doesn't do lunch.

R ALIEN LEGACY 80 Sierra On-Line, £39.99

Another of the several million space strategy games vying for your dosh, but one of the better ones. A bit like a cheaper version of Outpost without the pretty bits. Daunting at first, but rewards time spent on it and becomes quite addictive.

ALLIED GENERAL 83 SSI/Mindscape, £44.99

Windows 95-based follow-up to the hugely successful Panzer General that should appeal to wargamers and casual dilettantes alike. One or two faults, but its simplicity should appeal.

R37 PD38

C ASCENDANCY 93 Virgin, £39.99 NEY 93

Take all the bits you loved from just about every strategy, god or warfare game, set it in the context of space exploration and planetary conquest, and you get Ascendancy. Get stuck into this and you can kiss goodby to your social life, career and an acceptable level of personal hygiene. (Assuming you have any of these in the first place.)

Empire Interactive, £40.00

Serious and deep, deep strategy game that's the first to be designed exclusively for Windows 95. Dragging war games into the 90s? Whatever next? Good graphics?

R SATTLEGROUND GETTYSBERG 87 Empire Interactive, £39.99

Second in the Windows 95-based series. An excellent feel for the Gettysberg battles, complete with Quicktime movies and a Quick Start guide, but it needs 130MB of hard disk space for a full installation, or 6омв for a minimum. Which is quite a lot.

Third in the series. More views and unit

Empire Interactive, £39.99

types, but dumber AI. Still no scenario editor.



BATTLE ISLE 3: SHADOW OF THE

Blue Byte, £45.99

Third in the series of highly respected and very popular strategic battle games. Worth checking out if you like your strategy with a futuristic bent (ie your army jumper has silver patches on the elbows and shoulders)

R BEDLAM - 89 Mirage, £TBC

Take a range of isometrically viewed city levels, and add a dinky little armoured HERC, with more weapons of destruction at its disposal than the average aircraft carrier, and you have a highly addictive blasterama that's like Syndicate for the impatient, with weapon power-ups rather than an R&D team

BUZZ ALDRIN'S RACE INTO SPACE 95 C Interplay, £39.99

USA/USSR great space race. You can be either side if you want, you snivelling pinko



MicroProse, £44.99

Enhanced sequel in full 3D which can make things cluttered at times, especially if you have a number of windows open. Combat's been tightened up, with new units and 'hit points', and even experienced Civ players will find there's a lot to learn. (Note: Windows 95 or 3.1 with WinG only.)

R CIVIL WAR 83 Empire Interactive, £44.99

The sequel to Fields Of Glory, it's the secondbest American Civil War battle strategy game. Just to be annoving, we're not telling you what is the best one. You'll have to go and find it yourself.

CYBERJUDAS 80 Empire Interactive, £39.99

Political strategy game in which you play the President of the United States (no, the band), complete with an interface that lets you access every country in the world. Set up trade agreements, negotiate peace settlements, track down traitors in your midst, or just shag beauty queens. Intriguing if you're into political shenanigans; snore city if you're not.

COLONIZATION 90 MicroProse, £44.99

Civilization I with more depth and better graphics, released to make a quick buck until Civ 2 appeared. Allegedly.

COMMAND & CONQUER 95 Virgin, £44.99

Take the strategy and resource manager of *Dune 2*, add the fast-paced, real-time combat of Cannon Fodder, intelligent grunts, a myriad of weapons, and the explorat elements of Civilization and you have a hugely addictive game.

R28 LE36 PD37

Virgin, £14.99

Seriously difficult add-on missions for anyone who thinks they're a bit of a C&C whizz

CONQUEST OF THE NEW WORLD 75

Interplay, £44.99 Slow, cumbersome strategy game about... well, would you believe... conquering the New World.

R39 P136

Sierra, £44.95

Interesting turn-based space exploration game boasting a Dune-ish plot, with you building robots to mine ore from different planets in competition with other companies. Resource management a-go-go and worth a look, as long as you have the patience and can bear full-scale battles that will take only slightly less time than the Ice Age.

ZONE 16

Fantasy-based strategy gore-fest alert. Hurl fireballs, gore orcs, back, slash and generally behave like a drunken Cockney on a Friday night. Set your posse against others. Get all triumphant when you win. Take off your anorak, roll up the sleeves on your cardie and start thinking you're hard... and so on.

DUNE 82 Virgin, £45.95

Adventure/strategy mix that has you playing Paul Atreides, setting up a spice mining operation on Arrakis and attacking the evil Harknnen clan, driving them from the planet.

R DUNE # 89 Virgin, £34.99

Excellent real-time strategy game. Take one of the three tribes of Arrakis and struggle to beat the others until your mouse finger is a blood-soaked mess. The forerunner to the magnificent Command & Conquer. Available on Power, Corruption And Lies compilation.

G FANTASY GENERAL 92 SSI/Mindscape, £44.99

The third in the series uses the same combat and movement engine as Panzer and Allied General, but it's the most exciting wargame (if that's not an oxymoron) of the year so far.

R39 PD37

G FRONTIER: ELITE II 95 Gametek, £39.99

Absolute classic open-ended space trading game that lets you be anything you want even a space bore.

FRONTIER: FIRST ENCOUNTERS 78 Gametek, £39.99

Enhanced version of Elite II, bugged to jiggery.

GEARHEADS 90 Philips Media, £29.99

If we had a Weird category, this would be in it. It's a Windows 95-only sort of strategy/action game in which you set fighting wind-up toys against each other in an attempt to get them to the other side of the playing area. Surprisingly addictive.

GREAT NAVAL BATTLES II 86 SSI, £45.99

Even better, apparently, than Great Naval Battles I.

HAMMER OF THE GODS 77 US Gold, £39.99

Simple, Nordic mythology-set, turn-based strategy game.

THE HORDE 87 US Gold, £44.99

Slightly weird strategy game in which you try to develop and run a village, while waiting for the regular attacks by hideous. ravening monsters. A bit like being a pub landlord around here, really.

JAGGED ALLIANCE 72 Mindscape, £39.99

Risk meets Syndicate. Hardly original, but not bad.

KASPAROV'S GAMBIT 85 Electronic Arts, £44.99

Outstanding chess game with real attitude and personality of its own.

164 ZONE

MACHIAVELLI THE PRINCE 89
MicroProse, £44.99 Colonization-style strategy game packed to the eyebrows with assassinations, plagues,

pirates and political intrigue. Get caught in bed with an underage boy! Sell guns to terrorists and get away with it! Well, the historical equivalent, anyway. With play by e-mail facility.

R OUTPOST 84 Sierra On-Line, £44.99

One of the best space exploration/strategy games there is. A sort of cross between Civilization and Sim City 2000, only with space colonisation bits thrown in. Fine, addictive stuff

R18 PD18

PERFECT GENERAL 82 Mirage Software, £44.99

Just one of the many thousands of playable and engrossing hex-based wargames that are waiting out there to take you in their big, comfortable arms and protect you for the rest of your days, you huge hunk of man, you.

C RULES OF ENGAGEMENT 91 Impressions, £24.99

Very complicated, very involving and very old-fashioned-looking space strategy game.



Engrossing Sim City-style strategy game, only set in the Middle Ages and everything gets built before your eyes by little men. And everyone smells a bit. They did in those days, you know.

G SETTLERS 2 92 Blue Byte, £39.99

A whole range of improvements in this sequel, including a new interface, more varied gameplay and far, far bigger levels. Frighteningly addictive.

C SIM CITY 90 Maxis, £9,99

The original game that spawned a monster, it now looks really ropey and everyone has a copy of it somewhere

SIM CITY 2000 92 Maxis, £39.99

Fully rotatable 3D version of the classic strategy game with far more depth (literally - you have to look after stuff underground now, too) and an excellent hierarchical menu system to control it all.

SIM FARM 79

Maxis, £9.99

Fiddle about in cowsheds; enjoy the sweet smell of porcine success.

SIM TOWER 70 Maxis, £39.99

Sim City in a skyscraper, with absolutely the world's most complicated design of lift control system R98 PD31

SIM TOWN 81 Maxis, £29.99

Or Sim City gone macro. Aimed at children, it's fun and educational in equal measures: can you make the most ecologically sound town around? Will it irritate parents who are struggling to stop their kids turning into little Americans, though?

C SPACE HULK 90 Electronic Arts, £11.99

Classic real-time strategy action game with liberal doses of death and destruction. huge gouts of blood and gore, and masses of tension and fear. A bit like The Generation Game, really.

SPACE HULK: VENGEANCE OF THE BLOOD ANGELS 90

Electronic Arts, £49.99

Windows 95 version of the 300 version, featuring the best missions from the original game once again, a new campaign new graphics and sounds and a full 3D engine. It looks really fab, but is extremely hard.

C SYNDICATE PLUS 92 Electronic Arts, £11.99

The classic isometric strategy game for amoral, homicidal maniacs, plus the data disks, plus a network play option. You can tell this was put together back in the days when people thought you should have something more if a game was on CD-ROM. And now it's a barg.



YNDICATE WARS 95 Electronic Arts/Bullfrog, £44.95 The long-awaited update to the classic

strategy game is one of the most violent, addictive and fun games on any system, a fiendishly subversive sci-fi extravaganza that's incredibly atmospheric. There are astonishingly destructive weapons that allow you to mercilessly wipe out entire blocks and districts; improved AI; lightsourced, rotatable 3D cities and even some special characters. The more you play it, the better it gets. And there are loads of multi-player options, too.

TACOPS 81 Strategic Plus Software, £49.99

Excitement a-bungo and endless tactical possibilities make this basic-looking, real-time strategy game a must-have. Includes network play and play-by-mail/ e-mail options.

RAD PDAD

C THEME PARK 93 Electronic Arts, £44.99

Design and run your own theme park, competing against others for the title of the best in the world. Design rides to make children sick. Force old ladies' hip-bones to pop out of their sockets with the G-force on your roundabout. Have fun with salty snacks. And other stuff.

THIS MEANS WAR! 89 MicroProse, £44.99 A futuristic strategic wargame, using

elements from both Command & Conquer and Transport Tycoon. Slower-paced than C&C, but engrossing once you've managed to come to grips with the myriad of options available to you.

R35 PD32

USS TICONDEROGA 78 Mindscape, £9.99

Detailed naval strategy game. For people with strategic navels

C TRANSPORT TYCOON 94 MicroProse, £44.99

Follow up to Railroad Tycoon that has you noving into the world of aeroplanes and buses and stuff. Beautifully designed and thought-out. Excellent, hierarchical drop-down menus, and a playing area that feels about four times the size of Sim City 2000's. One of the best strategy games around - more engrossing than Jeremy Beadle's right hand.



MicroProse, £34.99

Top-notch strategy/resource management game with turn-based fighting against big, squishy, blobby aliens that are quite scary if you screw your eyes up. Amazingly addictive and compelling, it spawned the all-conquering sequel, X-COM, Available on Power, Corruption and Lies compilation, with Dune 2 and two others.

R VIRTUA CHESS 85 Titus, £44.99

Snazzy, 3D svGA chess action with a sophisticated AI that adjusts its difficulty level if you're out of your depth. Still very tough, although not as 'nails' as Chessmaster. Nice graphical extras, but not as many gameplay options – nor is it as subtle as the upgraded Kasparov's Gambit.

R27 PD25

Interplay, £39.99 Simple, addictive strategy game.

WARCRAFT 2: TIDES OF DARKNESS 82 Zablac, £44.99 Very addictive and enjoyable sequel. Good

network option and improved AI and control

C WAR AME CONSTRUCTION KIT 2: TANKS

SSI, £39.99 lutely brilliant wargame construction kit (it says here).

WARHAMMER 73

Mindscape, £39.99 Addictive Windows 95 real-time strategy game that's a bit too hard, with rather fiddly controls.

R WORMS 84 Ocean, £34.99

A cross between Lemmings and Cannon Fodder of limited one-player appeal, but brilliant in multi-player mode (up to four can play on a single machine). Turn-based combat revolves around using a variety of destructive weaponry to blow the arses off your opponents on levels that redraw with each new game. A great laugh.

R33 PD32

C X-COM: TERROR FROM THE DEEP 94 MicroProse, £44.99

The follow-up to UFO: Enemy Unknown, it's another turn-based strategy/combat classic, but this time set underwater, that will have you up till all hours, losing your sleep, job and girlfriend while you fight the jelly-like alien terrors from the... uh... well, deep. Hence the title, I suppose.

C Z 92 Time Warner Interactive, £44.95

Addictive Command & Conquer-style game, based on occupation of zoned areas to control weapon-producing factories. As a result, it's more strategic than C&C. and lacks the exploration aspect - you see the whole, arena-like level from the start. Network options, entertaining cut scenes and soldiers who feel free to criticise your efforts. And criticise you they will, because it's very, very hard indeed - the seemingly meagre 20 levels will take you

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It's all change at *Zone* this month. Jon's retreated into his own world to play with *Excel*, and left me, Chris and new boy Paul to play in the *Zone* sandpit. Keep your letters a comin' and watch out for that cat shit.

- Jeremy Wells



(Above) *Hind* is on the way – just don't hold your breath!

BE-HIND SCHEDULE?

Where the hell is *Hind?* You reviewed it a few months ago and it's still not out. Is it ever coming out?

Malcolm James, Hove

Hind was originally due for release back in June/July, hence the cover review in PC Zone. At the time Digital Integration assured us that the game was 99.9 per cent finished and ready to face up to the rigours of review. The plan being that the game would be finished and in the shops the month the review hit the streets.

After taking on board some of our comments (which were raised in the review) regarding the AI (artificial intelligence) of the infantry and some of the mission structures, they decided to hold back the release of the game in order to implement some improvements. Unfortunately (as is often the case) when DI started tweaking one area of the game, another started to sprout bugs (just as the new collisions demanded by the American market and implemented by Geoff Crammond to FIGP2 caused other parts of the game to fall over, which meant it was delayed).

Then as things started to come together, summer arrived and DI decided to hold over the release until the autumn as, like so many other publishers, they believe that people don't buy PC games during the summer months. Which brings us up to date (sort of).

The good news is that DI now plan to release the game by the end of October "at the very latest" and that there's now a new playable demo available which shows off the improved AI and missions. You'll also be able to play head-to-head PC versus Mac. Hopefully, the final release will be even better than the game we reviewed and completely bug-free. Hopefully.

Contact Digital Integration on 01276 684 959 for an up-date and the demo.

Letter of the month Z NOT FOR EVERYONE

I want to talk about the best real-time strategy game of 1996, the game that'll keep you up for weeks on end, the game to finally knock *Command & Conquer* off it's pedestal... but I can't, so I'm gonna have to talk about Bitmap Brothers' *Z* instead. I, like a great many people out there, have been awaiting the release of this game for quite some time, but even so, the numerous 'finger burnings' suffered when buying software, convinced me not to rush out and buy it without some form of recommendation. The legend "92% – Like *C&C* only harder, more strategic and more intense" then flashed passed my eyes.

This was the game for me! I rushed out... I bought it... And it wasn't! Now, I was exactly the sort of person your review was aimed at. I loved *C&C* and have completed it playing both sides. I wanted more of a challenge. The fact that there were only 20 levels discouraged me at first but then I saw, "You may well see yourself as a bit of a whizz at this sort of game (that's me!) and think that, with only 20 levels, you'll finish it pretty quickly (yep!). You won't". I did. I completed the final level within two days of buying the game. *C&C* took the best part of a month to finish playing both sides.

Harder? I think not. More strategic? Well it tries to be, but that doesn't really work either. I have found that the game is won or lost within the first couple of minutes of each level. With C&C, both sides had a chance to build up their forces & defences and choose when and where to attack. In Z, if you are losing after the first couple of minutes - you're gonna lose! There's no real chance to reverse the fortunes of war after an initial setback, which is surely what makes a game strategic. Because of this, you find yourself re-playing the start of each level time and time again to get a decent starting position, and this makes the game very

92% proof but not to everyone's taste according to freaky Neal Sinclair.

repetitive. I understand that you can't write a review that everyone's going to agree with, but being that this review was aimed specifically at *C&C* players I was a bit disappointed.

Neal Sinclair – neals@globalnet.co.uk PS Anyone wanna buy a copy of Z? Hardly used? Anyone? Anyone?

Okay, so you didn't like Z very much. We did. In fact everybody in the office did. Even the people from Metal Hammer next door stayed late to play it (and how uncool is it for a rock journo to do that?). This is very (very) rare. Most of us found it no walkover either. You're either a gaming wizard or a bit of a freak. Maybe both.

You do raise a few valid points though, but ultimately you've got to consider that Z is not a C&C sequel, but a completely new game, with different gameplay and objectives. As a result it requires different tactics and a different approach. We found it to be a lot quicker and a lot more intense than C&C, especially when played over a network against three other players. The review wasn't specifically aimed at C&C players, but at people who like strategy games, and maybe those who wouldn't play them normally, because Z is perhaps more accessible than most.

Ultimately, the Bitmaps set themselves up (just a bit) by putting the release date back further and further until everyone was so hyped up that consequently it was always going to be a bit of a disappointment to



IS THE X-FILES OUT THERE?

What's all this I hear about an X-Files game? Eh? Eh? When is it going to be released? I must know! Give Me Details! Now!

And where's old Culkus hiding, 'cause I ain't seen him on any cos lately isn't it? Bring him back NOW!

An X-Files fanatic, Diss

Fox Interactive announced that they were working on an X-Files game at the E3 trade show in the States last May. As far as we know, it features original 'never seen before' footage starring both David Duchovny and Gillian Anderson. Chris Carter (the show's creator) has been 'heavily involved' with the whole project. Although no firm release date has been set, Fox maintain that we can



expect to see their X-Files game (which as yet doesn't even have a title) around spring time next year. As soon as more information is released, we'll print it.

As far as ol' Culkus is concerned, he's been very busy holidaying and doing up an old boat he bought at the beginning of the summer. Fear not, he has been working on a new film however, which (if all goes to plan) will be on the December issue of PC Zone.

GAMES FOR W**KERS

I consider myself to be something of a computer buff – that is to say I like to play computer games while quite naked.

Now this is fine with your classics like *The Dig* and *Command & Conquer*, but today's releases are simply too demanding. I find that as the nights draw closer I am in more need of the blood that rushes to my brain as I fight the minions of *Quake* and ponder upon the complexities of *Z*. This simply never used to happen, the blood would settle much lower down.

What I really want to say is that if a game is to be a real hit, it would appear that it should adopt a name that starts with a letter from the tail end of the alphabet.

Thank you, Ben Morhall, Che

Ben Morhall, Chelmsford

Erm. So what you mean is that you like Z and think it's better than C&C. But you have to play it naked. And with one hand? Maybe Neil Sinclair should try this – he might enjoy Z a little more, and he may



(Left) Any old excuse to print another photo of Gillian Anderson

(Right) Just bask in the full glory of *F-22 Lightning II* – it's out next month – promise!

(Right) It's possible

to play FX Fighter

with two gamepads,

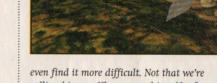
but it will cost you.

(Below) Command

& Conquer: just

perfect for those

tumescent evenings



calling him a w**ker or anything. Not for a moment. Just a smart arse.

ANORAKS AHOY!

Hi. In your September issue there was a Blueprint of F22 Lightning II which included a section asking "Remember F-22 Lightning?" The gist was that this game was the sequel to nothing. Like Star Wars.

I suggest that the 'II' refers to the plane, and is not chronological notation for the progression of F22 games. If you look in any big, colourful books with lots of pictures of fighters, you'll see the A-10 Tank Buster referred to as the Thunderbolt II just as the F22 is referred to as the Lightning II. This is simply not to confuse the A-10 with the P37 Thunderbolt and the F22 with the P38 Lightning. (I think).

I hope this clears up Warren Chrismas's bewilderment. Christopher Gouldstone –

D2ydx2@aol.com (The proud winner of February's PC Zone Competition)

My, you really know your aircraft (unlike our very own Wazza it would seem). A quick chinwag with NovaLogic confirmed your investigations.

Apparently, the Lockheed P38 Lightning was the first aeroplane developed from the start as a military type by Lockheed and was the only American fighter built before World War II to be still in production on VJ Day. The Lightning was used in all US combat zones as a high and low altitude fighter, fighter escort, bomber, photo recon aircraft, low-level attack and rocket fighter and smokescreen layer.

It was generally considered to be a rather fantastic all-rounder, just as the new Lightning II is being hyped as the greatest thing with two wings since... er, the first Lightning. So, you're right.

TWO-PLAYER TRAUMAS

What do I have to do to get two game pads or joysticks to work with my PC? I've tried one of those splitter things but I can never get all the buttons to work. Consequently, whenever I play a



two player game, such as FX Fighter or Actua, one of us has to use the keyboard which is just unfair. Don't tell me it isn't possible, or I'll sell my Pentium and buy a 200 quid console.

Jeffrey Root, Wimbledon

It is possible to use two gamepads, though it can be an effort. Splitters don't always work with gamepads as there are simply too many inputs to cope with. The easiest way to get two gamepads working on your PC is to invest in either the Gravis GRiP which can handle up to four pads (contact Gravis Holland: 0031365364443) or the new Microsoft Sidewinder gamepad (reviewed on page 127 – which allows you to daisy-chain up to four pads. It's not the cheapest way to do it, but it's the easiest. They're both nice pads too. 7

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and that goes for everything,

"What Culky Says Are What Them Star Say"

Alright? Colin here innit. I've been doing a bit of channelling, and it ain't Dover to

Calais niver. I've been channelling spirits from the heavens and that, through my mind

They come and rest on my brain like omelettes. I've had 27 visions and 34 visits this year.

QUAIRVOYANT

and that includes the one what I had last Friday night outside

will become. It hasn't I

Us Culks are well known as 'Seers' around Feltham

Green, even my mum was psychic. She once went

'O' levels"...she was right...I ain't got none never!

I predicted the world wouldn't end in 1989.

I predicted that mobile phones would be

I predicted that air travel would get much cheaper as millions upon millions of people

rush to leave the 'Bog-of-Europe' that England

to me "Colin, you ain't never gonna get no

But, however.

CE LEO

Culky's channel says...

chart. The usual Leo confidence

has been turned into a type of fudge

cake with bits of manky old lemon

irresistible offer from a close friend

peel hanging off it. However, an

appears in the form of a driving

trip to the park, so they can show

On no account agree to this trip.

AT LIBRA

Culky's channel says...

A rubber glove salesman will

call to sell you some 'wears'

he's hiding a dark secret,

but beware, under those gloves

they're cheaper elsewhere, by

a long shot so it seems. So

shop around while Mars, the

'bargain-bin' planet is in your

chart, to get the best prices,

Avoid grassy slopes at the end

not just rubber gloves.

Destiny says...

of the month.

off their parking skills.

Destiny says...

PISCES

Culky's channel says...
Toilet trouble, drain trouble and trouble round the 'back-end' are a Pisces lot, and this month isn't going to be any better, with trouble round the 'front bits' adding to your usual smell. As Mars, the planet of drains, is now entering your chart, so a telephone call on Monday will put a long overdue plan into action.

CULKY SAYS

Destiny says...

An industrial pump parts manufacturer promises a visit to measure you up, and see if their latest pump (The Defoul 1500p.s.i Special) is up to the job.

TAURUS

Culky's channel says...

An evil family friend will try to block your plans for the future, only to unblock them, then block them again, then unblock them, only to block them, then unblock them again

You won't know which way to turn, but help from a close friend is at hand, but they will try to play mind games with you by offering to help, then refusing to, only to offer help again, only to refuse it.

Destiny says... A new van will bring the family closer

& AQUARIUS

Since Mars the planet of love is now in the middle of your chart, your love life is looking hectic. That gorgeous neighbour you fancy will make a sexy comment that you won't find sexy at all, in fact you'll find it quite disgusting, but because you are desperate you'll go for it. And to complicate matters you will receive amorous

looks from above... a lorry driver perhaps?

One in the 'hand' is better than two in the 'bush'

SCORPIO

Culky's channel says...

Scorpios will be the big winners this month. Mars, the planet of luck and fortune enters the moon of Scorpio this week, if you enter 25 goes on the National Lottery each week for the next four weeks the stars guarantee a win.

Your three lucky numbers are 10, 44, 33 ... you win

Friends and loved ones send you stars and that is got to say. mixed messages since Mars, the planet of 'confusion and complicity' AT GEMINI is approaching its zenith within your

travel hasn't got

any dearer has it?

Time to see what them

A request for a driving licence is denied by the local DVLA, but drive anyway since luck is with you from the 20th to the end of the month.

Mars the planet of 'short haul travel' is predicting a successful little trip down to Dixons.

Destiny says...

A bungled ram-raid is on the cards but a few nice bits of kit do end up in the car. Lucky night... Tuesday.

& VIRGO

Culky's channel says...

Those secret esoteric powers that Virgos have been going on and on to us about for all these years without visible expression will culminate in a show of spectacular proportion this week.

Mars, the planet of 'hidden latent powers and insight' will give you the impetus for this colossal outpouring... "Stand back and watch the show" is my advice to friends and neighbours of Virgos.

Destiny says...

After the 15th you will decide not to eat eggs anymore as they're high in cholesterol.

ARIES

Culky's channel says...

A work colleague makes life difficult for you next month. But Aries are normally good at the art of war. However, since Mars, the planet of 'interdepartmental relations' is badly aspected for you at the moment, the only option is to play dead literally. Lie down on the floor for a bit, they'll get jealous as you'll appear to get some extra shut-eye, they'll be nice to you then.

Destiny says...

People will walk all over you, it's the way forward.

CAPRICORN

Culky's channel says...

Mars, the planet of 'fine silverware and antique broaches' is well placed for most, if not all, Capricorne

Coupled with your insatiable lust for all things tiny or shiny, it seems that this could be a very profitable month. Avoid jewellers in the following 'rush' hours (Mon-Sat 9am-6pm) and your luck will shine!

A visit from a gentleman in a blue uniform will not be as bad as expected.

CANCER

Mars the planet of fire will be entering your charts on Friday 17th. This is not saying you are going to spontaneously combust in front of your loved ones or near those who are dear, but just that extra precautions should be taken when making tea, lighting a cigarette or filling the hotty.

Destiny says...

Avoid volcanoes on the 5th.

AS SAGITTARIUS

Culky's channel says...

The fact that Mars, the planet of 'indecision' is currently in the centre of your chart will put you under further mental pressure this week. Should you do what you had no intention of doing? OR should you not do what you had every intention of doing? Is it possible not to do what you had every intention of doing? Is it probable that you will do what you had no intention of doing?

A tartan stranger arrives at the door on the 16th.

ZONE 1







HE REASON I'M AFRAID OF MONEY is quite simple... I haven't got any. If I was rolling in the stuff I'd no doubt love it to death, and would subsequently buy dedicated magazines, with titles like Money Monthly or Dosh Illustrated. (They'd be very expensive magazines, you understand, so poor people couldn't afford them).

But like I say, I'm skint - as I was explaining last week to a bloke I call Captain Lottery, who resides on the same storey of the crappy South London towerblock where I live in squalor. We were waiting for the lift. I call him Captain Lottery, incidentally, because all he ever talks about are his lottery

He's afraid of ... Money

"But it's the odds," I said reasonably. "They're hard to grasp at a gut level, I know, but I wrote this computer programme which simulates 10 draws a second. It does graphs and stuff. I left it running all night once, and the next morning I hadn't even won the £100,000 bonus ball prize."

"So? So what? What the feck does that mean? You're winding me up, pal!"

I explained - trying hard not to sound patronising - that this 'overnight simulation' was the equivalent, in real terms, of 360,000

I decided, to placate him with a load of arse. (Something I should have done in the first place.)

"I had to sell the computer," I said. "I got behind with the rent."

"Oh yeah?" he replied, suspiciously. "Mind you," I added quickly, "I often wonder if there was a bug in the programme. After all, me telling you that your chances of winning the £100,000 bonus is less than 360,000 to 1 isn't going to mean much to someone who's just won that very same £100,000, is it?"

"Eh? Er, no, it ain't," said Captain Lottery

"And that old 14 million-to-one stuff is going to mean even less to the person who's won 28 million quid on a rollover

"Tooz feckin' right!" replied Captain Lottery.

"Besides," I said, "If you got a large enough syndicate together you could win every time. A syndicate of a hundred people, even if they only won the smallest prize, would each earn 10p every single week, for only a penny outlay. Get together a syndicate of a thousand people and the outlay would be even less: you'd all have to pay in Lire, but the rewards, in

Sterling, could be breathtaking! You

"It's a dead cert," I said.

the doors opened, and we alighted. Captain Lottery, after a few moments of deliberation, suggested (firmly) that we start a syndicate... him and me. Discretion being the better part of valour means that I now, every bloody Saturday lunchtime, am forced to drop a 50p coin through his sodding letterbox. I'm paying him 'protection money', and he doesn't

Capitalist Spiritualism

In the continual search for methods of making cash from not much actual work – and realising that even if my 'syndicate' with Captain Lottery comes good he won't give me a share of the winnings – I've fallen back on the old favourite: start a religion. The religion I've got in mind is for people who like the idea of being a Buddhist but who, for obvious reasons, don't want to denounce all their wordly belongings (and all that malarkey). If you want to be a Virtual Buddhist then simply send £9.99 to Mr Cursor at the usual *PC Zone* address, and you will receive, by return of post, a membership number and a poster. The poster, which should be placed on your bedroom wall (above your bed), looks like this...

> "I got two right on Saturday," he said, somewhat predictably. I knew he was about to tell me which ones they were, too: "One was a 12 and the other was a 16."

"Oh," I said.

"Yes," he continued, telling me his other four, and explaining how the overall 'pattern' was right, but that it just happened to be in the wrong place.

"A stroke of bad luck," I said. I was willing the lift to appear.

"I'm getting nearer the big one every week, though, innit!" he announced confidently. "You do the lottery yerself, do ya?"

"Not generally, no," I said. "I'm too skint most of the time."

"Skint? Skint?" yelped Captain Lottery, as if he'd stubbed a toe, "You can't be too skint to do the lottery, mate. That ain't no excuse! What are ya talkin' abart? You ain't gettin' away with that!"

Disaster. I now had to justify not doing the lottery to someone who believed in it as if it were a religion. It's worth mentioning that Captain Lottery, although a tragic saddo, is also about 10 feet tall and built like a brick shithouse. In his eyes I was now a blaspheming little infidel.

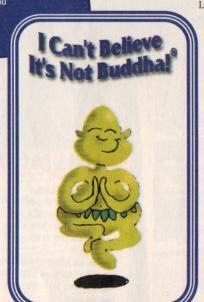
"If you want money you gotta spend money," he snarled, angrily.

years worth of lottery draws.

Captain Lottery looked confused. He was apparently running out of brain cells. His fore-arm muscles were starting to flex, causing his merchant navy style tattoos to dance about in a purple jig. The lift chose this moment to arrive, and, seconds later, I was enclosed inside a tiny steel cage with a deranged maniac from the planet Boing. There followed a ten second silence, after which all hell let loose...

"Show me your fecking computer programme!" demanded Captain Lottery, suddenly.

Oh no - I'd have to let him into my flat for that. And if he couldn't face the truth from the PC, he might accuse me of rigging things and demand satisfaction there and then: 'We can settle this with fists or knives!' he might say. 'How about fists, knives or three rounds of Baku Baku Animal?' I could only reply. Then he'd put me in hospital anyway. Now was the moment,



could buy a house in Kent!" "Kent?" said Captain Lottery.

The lift reached the 12th floor, even know it. Bastard! 7.

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